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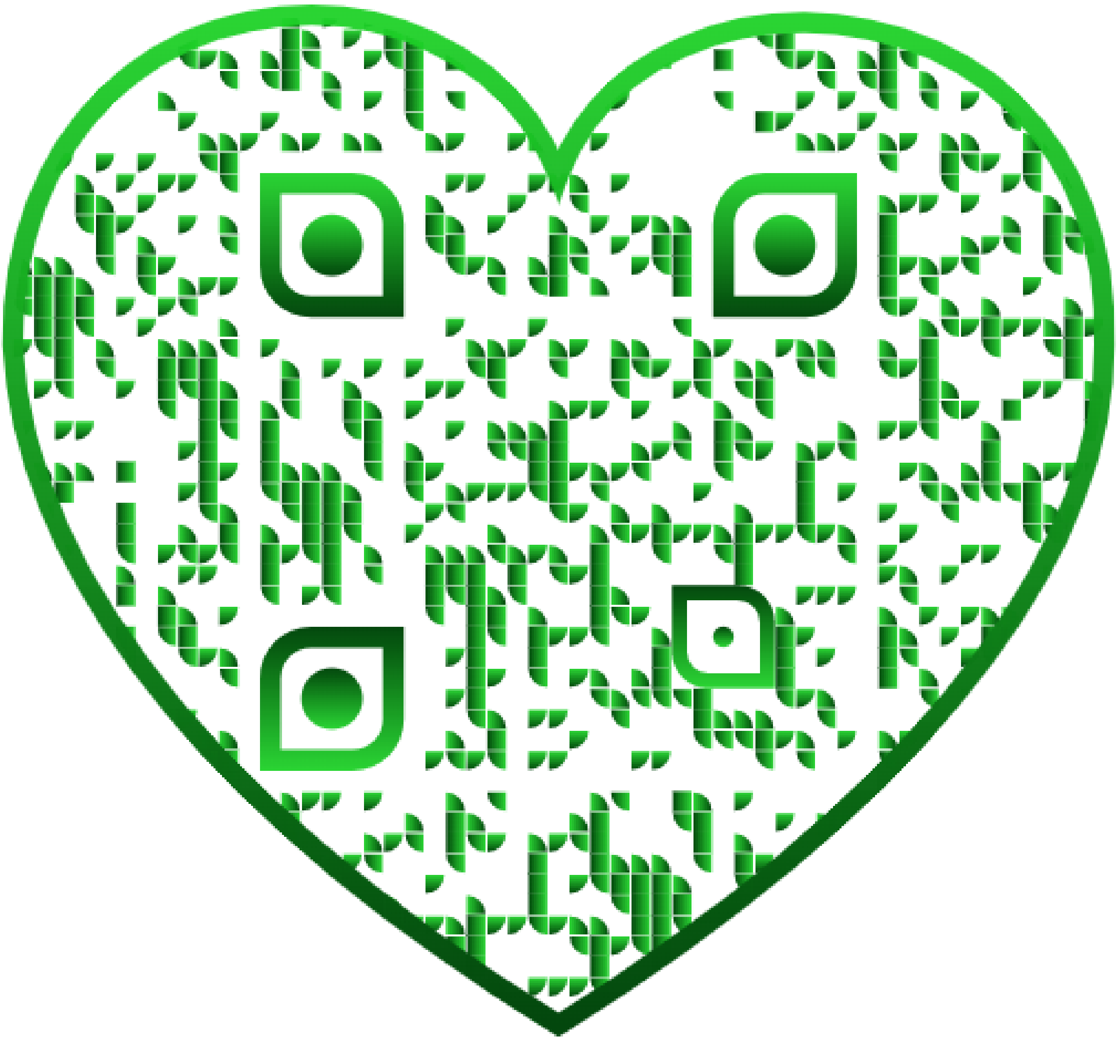

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SKIN SCIENCE FOR LIFE

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MENTAL HEALTH SCREENING

The importance of understanding the psychological landscape of patients

SABIKA SAYS

Our new columnist gives her guide to treating skin of colour

IN-CLINIC WITH DR MUNIR SOMJI

HOW DR MEDISPA CREATED A MULTICHANNEL AESTHETICS BRAND

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The acne *Revolution* is here
DR NESTOR'S
EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND
READERS' CHOICE 2024 NEWBEAUTY WINNER
AviClear

AviClear's 2024 Year in Review

At AviClear, 2024 was a year defined by progress and partnership. We broke barriers in acne treatment and delivered solutions that clinics and patients trust.

AS SEEN IN

THE Sun ELLE Oprah Daily TODAY Forbes Harper's BAZAAR marie claire

Here's what made 2024 extraordinary:

AviClear
CUTERA

01

Unveiling *Breakthroughs*

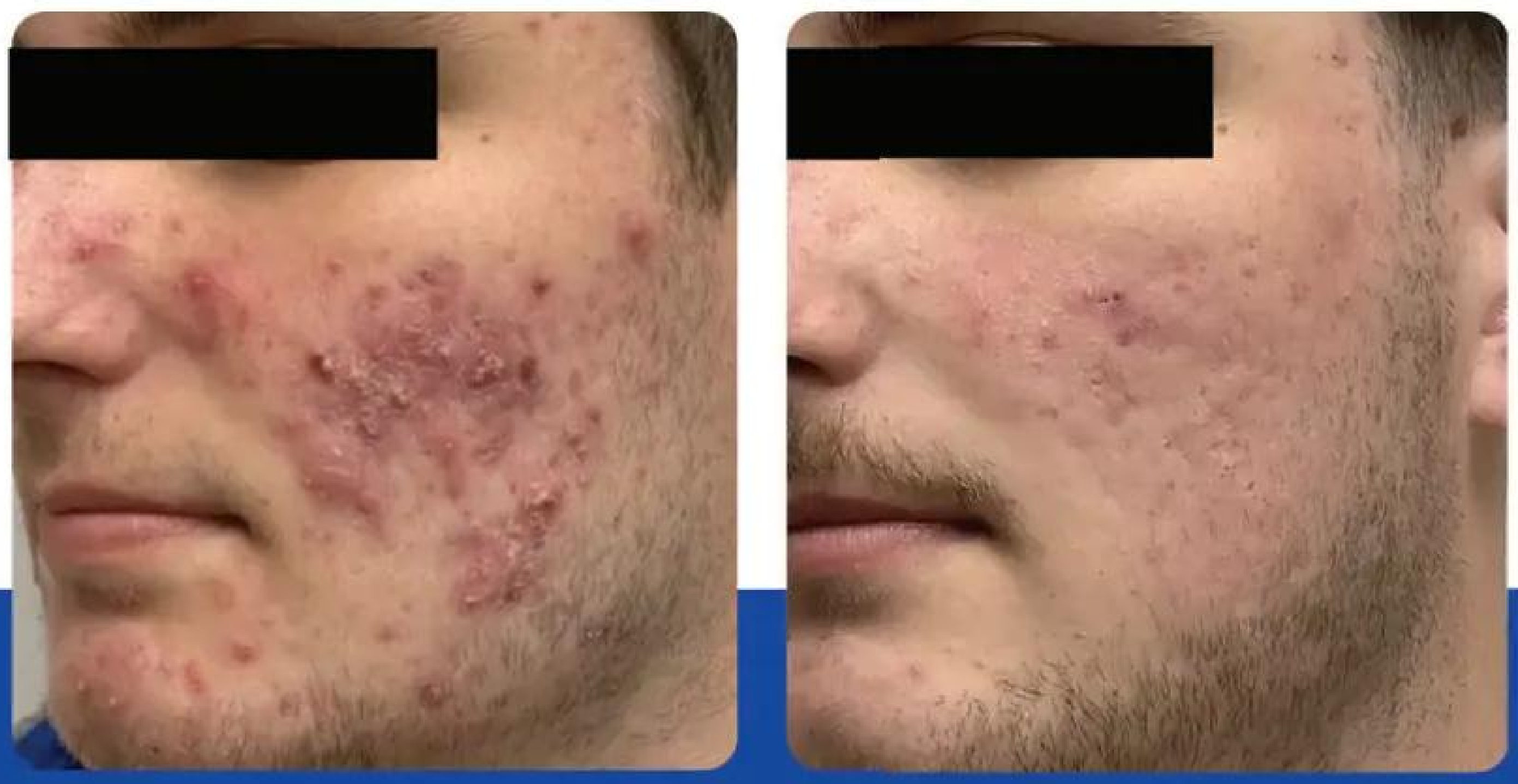
AviClear further solidified its position as a game-changer with its innovative energy device, leading the way in long-term acne treatment for all severities, FDA-cleared and ahead of its time.

Explore What's Next with AviClear and join our network of trusted providers.

Setting New *Standards*

Our dedication to clinical research empowered practices to deliver visible, science-backed results that patients can trust.

02



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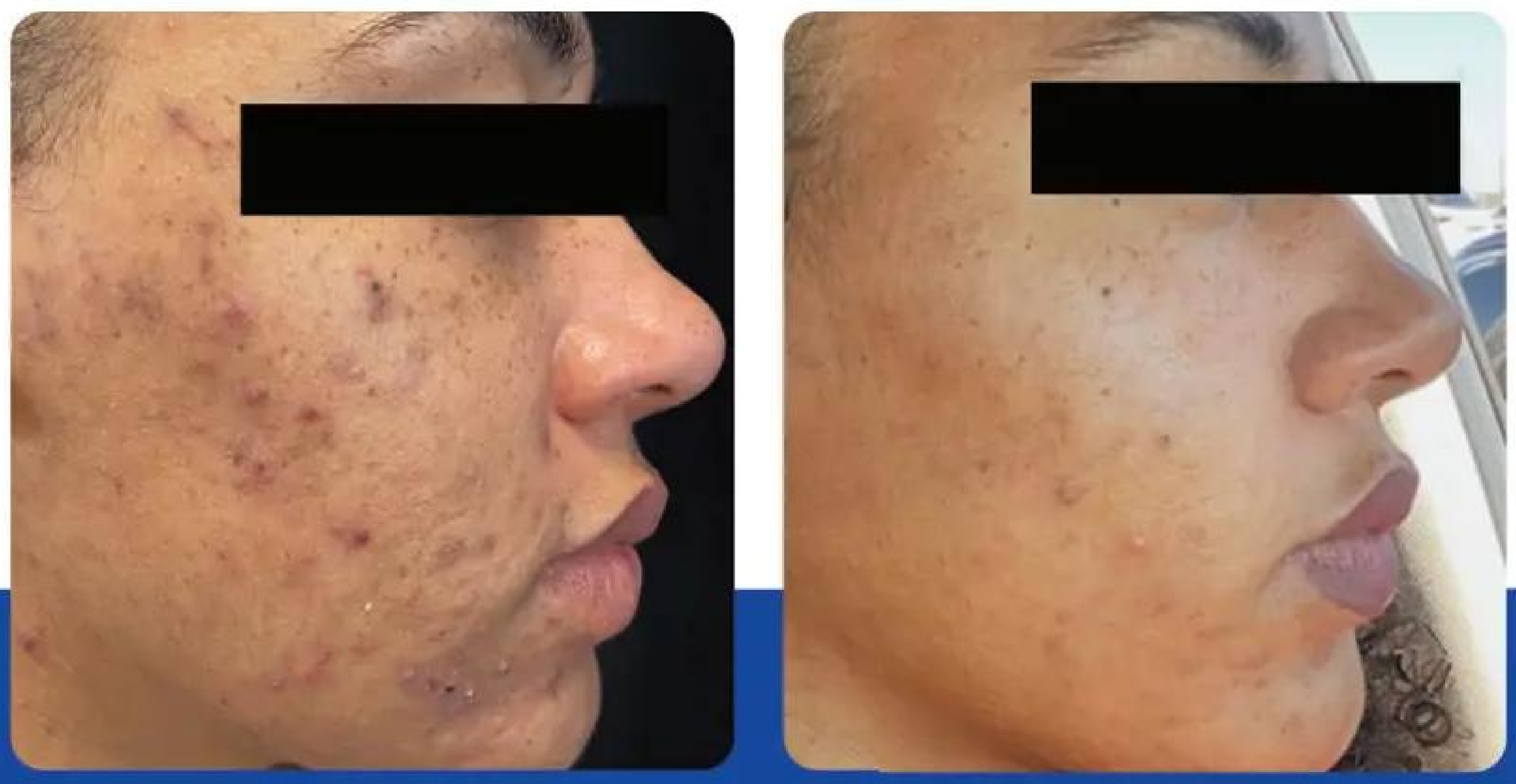
Before | After 2 Treatment Sessions

Photos courtesy of Dr. J. Fromowitz. Results may vary.



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Before | After 3 Treatment Sessions

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03

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THAMES SKIN CLINIC
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dr.nicole dermatology
QUINN CLINICS
TATIANA + RISHI
THE MAYFIELD CLINIC BY DR NESTOR

Success *Stories*

Listening to how providers have successfully integrated AviClear into their practices inspires us to keep innovating.

04

> *AviClear is a breakthrough in acne treatment, offering FDA-cleared, long-term effectiveness. Having treated over 50 patients, I've witnessed its impressive, lasting results firsthand.*

Dr Nestor Demosthenous
The Mayfield Clinic

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aesthetic MEDICINE
INSPIRING BEST PRACTICE IN MEDICAL AESTHETICS
IN-CLINIC WITH DR MUNIR SOMJI
HOW DR MEDISPA CREATED A MULTI-CHANNEL AESTHETICS BRAND

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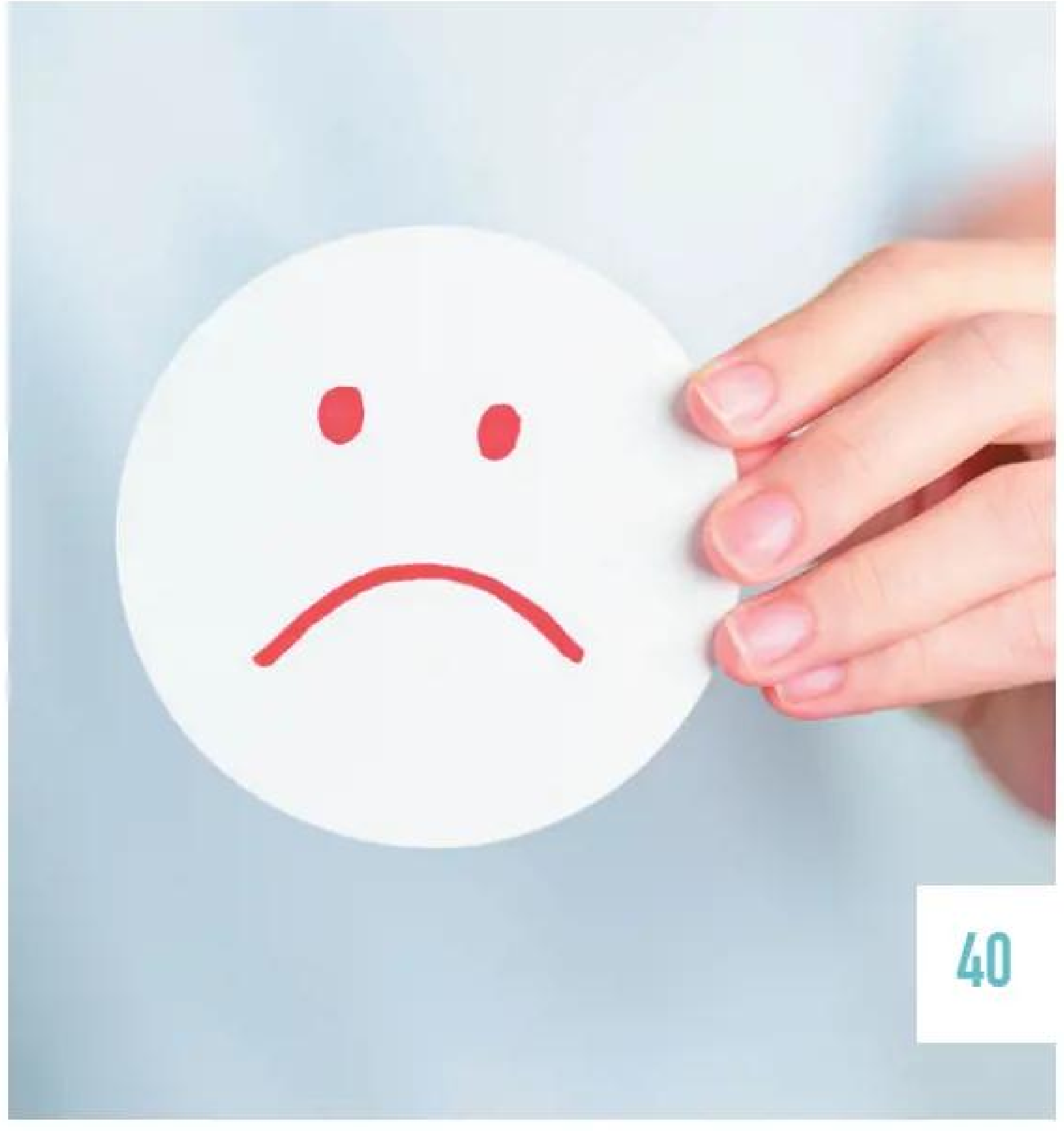

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Are they a compelling alternative to traditional work patterns?

WELCOME TO THE FEBRUARY ISSUE OF AESTHETIC MEDICINE MAGAZINE

Welcome to the February issue of *Aesthetic Medicine* magazine, where we focus on diversity and inclusion within the industry. From expert insights on how to treat skin of colour to discussions on menopause support, we are covering a range of important topics that contribute to a more inclusive and representative aesthetic medicine field.

In this issue, you will find in-depth clinic profiles, treatment reviews, and practical tips on managing finances and growing your aesthetic business. We also tackle important subjects like mental health screening and the implications of compressed work hours on practitioners.

We hope this issue inspires you to embrace diversity and make inclusive choices in your daily practice. As always, we welcome your feedback and suggestions for future topics to cover, so please email me on anna.d@thepbgroup.com with any comments or thoughts. Thank you for joining us on this journey toward a more diverse and inclusive aesthetic medicine industry.

Warm regards,
Anna Dobbie
***Aesthetic Medicine* • Editor**

MEET THE EXPERTS

The *Aesthetic Medicine* editorial board's clinical expertise and diverse range of specialities help ensure the magazine meets the needs of the readers. In this issue, we have received guidance from the following members:

DR RAJ THETHI

Dr Raj Thethi is a nationally renowned expert in medical aesthetics. As well as being a member of the Royal College of Surgeons, he attained a Level 7 accreditation in medical aesthetic injectables and holds a separate first-class honours degree in anatomy having a personal, specialist interest in head and neck anatomy.

DR SHIRIN LAKHANI

Dr Shirin Lakhani is an aesthetic doctor specialising in advanced facial aesthetics, skin health and wellness. In addition to consulting on the full range of aesthetic treatments, Dr Lakhani has specialist expertise in the areas of intimate health and hormone replacement therapy for both men and women. She is a significant voice of authority within the intimate health space, speaking widely on HRT, menopause, incontinence, and intimate health.

DR MEI-YING YEOH

Dr Mei-Ying Yeoh's career spans general dentistry and hospital-based practice, with extensive experience as a core trainee in maxillofacial surgery. She managed minor facial injuries and assisted in major surgeries, including jaw reconstruction, gaining deep expertise in head and neck anatomy. Trained by leading experts, Dr Yeoh now focuses exclusively on aesthetic medicine and has been educating medical professionals since 2019.

CHERYL BARTON

Cheryl Barton is an NMC registered nurse with over 25 years full time practice within the NHS and over 20 years in independent healthcare practice. Barton holds a post graduate diploma in Cosmetic Medicine, graduating from university with a distinction. She is a nurse prescriber, and a full member of the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) and the British Association of Medical Aesthetic Nurses (BAMAN).

VANESSA BIRD

Vanessa Bird has worked for many leading distributors in aesthetics. She uses over a decade of industry experience, knowledge, and connections as The Aesthetic Consultant to understand the specific challenges faced by many successful, high-profile individuals and clinics as she helps them to succeed in the elite 'top tier'.

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3d-aesthetics.co.uk

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Alison Telfer,
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HOT OFF THE PRESS

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2023
n Aesthetic
FERENCE
RE BACK AT
Rooms, Birmingham
nd Friday 15th September
he largest event in the UK

Paul Burgess stands down as BAMAN chief executive

Paul Burgess MBE concluded his term as the chief executive of the British Association of Aesthetic Nurses (BAMAN) on January 1, 2025, after 10 years with the organisation. The new chief executive is yet to be named.

In his resignation announcement, Burgess also said that 2025 will see the election of a new management board and officers, as the existing team stands down: "I would like to place on record my thanks to the many members who have served on this management board, in particular, the leadership provided by Sharon Bennett as chair. Your achievements are there for all to see."

PBA Business Associates managing director Burgess will be developing his own business interests in Africa, continuing his charitable activities and maintaining an interest in medical aesthetics.

He also thanked the "outstanding group of medical aesthetic nurses that have formed the BAMAN management board", as well as vice chair Sharon King.

"Along the way, I have also met and worked with a great and highly motivated HQ team, led by Gareth Lewis and numerous BAMAN members across the breadth of the UK," he continued. "The association has grown from its small beginnings to now being the most recognised and respected association in medical aesthetics for nurses. It can look forward to a great future with record membership numbers, a stable financial situation, strong reserves and a regional structure with highly motivated leaders. I wish you all the best."

Royal Surgical College announces suite of honours and new deans

The Royal College of Surgeons Edinburgh (RCSEd) recently honoured several prominent figures in the medical field, including a former BBC editor and the president of a sister Royal Surgical College.

Branwen Jeffreys, whose late father was a fellow of the college, has been formally appointed and robed as a regent of the college.

Jeffreys' distinguished career with the BBC includes her tenure as the corporation's first education editor and nearly a decade as a senior health correspondent, where she initiated an award-winning emergency wait tracker and explored the ethics of rationing healthcare.

Beyond her work with the BBC, Jeffreys has also served as a governor on The Health Foundation board for nine years.

Mr Mike McKirdy, a renowned medical professional who has recently concluded his term as president of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, has been awarded the fellowship ad hominem of RCSEd.

A retired consultant breast surgeon for NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, Mr McKirdy was honoured for his significant contributions to the medical profession.

Scottish Government opens consultation for aesthetic treatments

The Scottish Government has launched a consultation into a licensing scheme for non-surgical aesthetic procedures including microneedling, botulinum toxin injections, chemical peels and dermal fillers.

The consultation opened on December 20 last year and will close on February 14.

In a similar format to the England consultation which ran from September to October 2023, the Scottish Government consultation breaks down the procedures into three key groups. As with the England consultation, beauty professionals have expressed concern that comparatively low-risk procedures such as mesotherapy and radiofrequency would require the oversight of a healthcare professional if the framework were to proceed in its current format. Meanwhile, procedures such as electrolysis, traditionally carried out by advanced beauty therapists, would be reclassified as safe for medics only.

Beauty and aesthetics professionals are urged to have their say via the consultation before the February 14 deadline.

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Paris
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Hebrides
Orkney Is.
Shetland Is.
Cape Wrath

Living in the North benefits skin health

New climate data has analysed every UK region to determine where is healthiest for your skin. The data, gathered by Fresha, shows that living in Scotland and the North East is better for skin, due to lower pollution and UV levels. It has also revealed that residents of southern coastal cities face the highest skin health risks from wind, humidity, and sun exposure. The research assessed key environmental factors impacting skin health across 100 UK areas, including air pollution, humidity, temperature, wind speed, and precipitation. It then calculated scores for each area to pinpoint those most likely to contribute to poorer skin health, including air pollution, humidity, temperature, wind speed, and precipitation. It then calculated scores for each area to pinpoint those most likely to contribute to poorer skin health.

Dr Catherine Fairris joins AesthetiCare faculty

Aesthetic practitioner and president of the British College of Aesthetic Medicine (BCAM) Dr Catherine Fairris is the newest faculty member of aesthetic distributor AesthetiCare.

Dr Fairris joins the faculty with Dr Paris Acharya, Dr Karen Doherty and Dr Jaskaren Midh. Her responsibilities include guiding protocol development, fostering peer-to-peer inspiration in the field and enhancing evidence-based data.

She will play a key role in raising awareness for AesthetiCare and its brand portfolio, which includes ALLSKIN|MED, Biretex and Heliocare. “I am absolutely thrilled to be invited to join the faculty of ALLSKIN|MED, a renowned skincare brand owned by Cantabria Labs,” said Dr Fairris. “As a passionate advocate for evidence-based skincare and skin rejuvenation, I am excited to join such an esteemed group of experts who are already part of this dedicated team.”

DermaFocus warns of unapproved pharmacies selling Plinest

Distribution and training company DermaFocus has reported a notable rise in the number of online shops and pharmacies selling the Plinest range of polynucleotides.

As the UK’s exclusive distributor of Plinest, DermaFocus warns that products which are not bought directly from them or approved partners are at risk of safety concerns.

DermaFocus prides itself on its stringent distribution service, which strictly complies with Good Distribution Practice (GDP) standards.

This ensures:

- All products are shipped by Italian manufacturer Mastelli to the DermaFocus warehouse facility which is specifically designed for pharmaceutical goods. This guarantees a sterile environment, sufficient ventilation, lighting, temperature control, security and space
- Products are checked and stored with batch numbers
- Products are shipped from the DermaFocus warehouse to sub-distributers in dedicated vehicles that adhere to handling and storage requirements
- All products have relevant documentation to enable traceability
- Monthly audits and inspections are conducted to ensure whole team is complying with GDP, with improvements made as necessary.

To further protect patients’ safety, DermaFocus and sub-distributors only train and supply to healthcare professionals who have provided their medical pin number and evidence of insurance cover. Extensive checks are conducted to ensure these are legitimate. Patient leaflets and post-procedure advice are also included in all shipments free of charge.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Lyma launches new supplement tool

Supplement brand Lyma has launched the Lyma Index, a tool designed to help customers demystify the supplement industry by revealing the ingredients and the proven doses consumers should take. “For too long the world of supplements and multi vitamins have been ambiguous but the truth is powerful, and we want to help customers make informed decisions,” commented founder, Lucy Goff.

Phorest launches sustainability initiative

Phorest held an event at the Dunsany Nature Reserve in County Meath, Ireland, in partnership with Irish Trees. The salon software solutions company planted a tree for every salon joining the Phorest family, to celebrate its commitment to sustainability, biodiversity, and climate action.

PCA Skin unveils academy app

After a year of development, Colgate’s cosmeceutical skincare brand, PCA Skin UK, has unveiled its Academy App to help stockists access training, connect with their community, and stay informed. Shaped by practitioner feedback, the app is specifically designed for intuitive design and accessibility, comprehensive e-learning courses, brand resource libraries and live community feeds.

Breast enlargement surgery requests up by 83%

Cosmetic surgery group Pall Mall has revealed that requests for breast enlargement surgeries have soared by 83% over the last 12 months while rhinoplasty procedures getting an impressive 45% increase. Male chest reductions declined by 40%, as men increasingly turn to alternative treatments like VASER liposuction for body refinement. Despite this shift, overall male cosmetic procedures have grown steadily by 5.5%, with male rhinoplasty surgeries almost doubling (83%) compared to the previous year.

Acre secures UK distribution rights for Galderma

Acre has announced its appointment as official UK distributor for independent dermatology company Galderma. Founded in 2018, Acre is a subsidiary of CST Pharma Group Holdings, a leading contributor to the NHS supply chain. CST Pharma, an MHRA-regulated medicines wholesaler, holds over 200 NHS hospital contracts across England, Scotland, and Wales. Since entering the aesthetics field, Acre has focused on integrating its pharma heritage, standards and expertise into the industry. “This truly is a monumental moment for Acre,” said Neil Clarkson, co-founder of Acre. “Our partnership with Galderma is the culmination of years of hard work and dedication and it really is testament to the team here at Acre, our stringent processes and the wonderful community who trust us each and every day. Galderma’s portfolio represents the gold standard in skin health, and we are honoured to bring these solutions to the UK market. We look forward to supporting practitioners and patients alike with a portfolio that truly makes a difference.”

Guinot partners with Made for Life Foundation

Guinot has partnered with Made for Life Foundation to introduce the Serenity Hydra Summum Facial, a treatment specifically designed to cater inclusively to clients living with cancer and other life-limiting conditions. This new offering empowers Guinot therapists to confidently provide tailored, safe treatments for all, reinforcing Guinot’s commitment to compassionate client care and their salons.

With studies indicating that at least one in two people will experience cancer in their lifetime, the collaboration addresses this gap by equipping therapists with the knowledge and ability to offer gentle, relaxing therapies to all, including those navigating challenging health journeys. Guinot has also introduced the Cancer Care Course, a Habia-endorsed curriculum, that offers therapists comprehensive training on the new treatment and education on working with clients who are in various stages of cancer. Upon completing the two-day training, therapists earn the Guinot Oncology Certificate and are registered with both Made for Life Foundation and the Standards Authority for Touch in Cancer Care (SATCC) – making it easy for clients seeking qualified safe havens to find them.

CPP expands in Europe

As part of Cosmetic Physician Partnership (CPP)'s strategic European expansion, the network has collaborated with four renowned clinics: Define Clinics, Holland Park, Amer Clinic London, and The Ghanem Clinic in London. "I am delighted to announce my partnership with the CPP, a leading global aesthetic and cosmetic group of clinics based in Canada and the United States," said The Ghanem Clinic founder Mr Ali Ghanem. "Being part of CPP represents an incredible opportunity to bring the latest advancements in aesthetic medicine to my patients. Through access to global expertise, innovative technologies, and operational support, I can focus on delivering the highest standards of care while contributing to the growth of CPP's European presence." To learn more, visit theghanemclinic.com.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Clinic Brands appoints new head of sales

Jo Pillans has been announced as the new head of sales for UK and Norther Ireland for Skeyndor. Pillans brings a wealth of experience from the beauty and aesthetic industry, having worked with leading brands such as Image Skincare, Inika Organic, and most recently Obagi Medical. She also held the position of director of training and development at the Edinburgh School of Beauty.

Donna Kirkland joins The Smart Group Medical as head of sales

The Smart Group Medical has announced the appointment of Donna Kirkland as head of sales. She brings over 30 years of expertise in the medical aesthetics industry, making her a pivotal addition to the team.

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3D Aesthetics announces new appointments and forward direction for the brand

3D Aesthetics has announced two new hirings as the brand looks to grow its presence in the medical aesthetics industry in 2025. The company has appointed former managing director of award-winning company Dermalux, Dane Needham, as managing director. Throughout the past few months, Needham has already been hard at work, evaluating every corner of the business, and creating plans to develop the brand, evolving it both through advancing business systems and helping to develop the next generation of technology.

Also joining the 3D Aesthetics brand and leading the new and exciting Elite MD division set to launch by March 2025 is Rachel McInnes. With over 28 years' experience in the industry, working with internationally recognised brands such as Dermalux, BTL and Lutronic, she said, "I am excited to embark on this new journey as the specialist sales manager for 3D Aesthetics, working with the new medical division, 'Elite MD'. It's an incredible opportunity to lead, innovate, and drive growth in a rapidly evolving industry. Together, we'll redefine excellence in aesthetic solutions, building strong partnerships and delivering exceptional results for both clients and their business." Following challenges within the industry of late, McInnes is also passionate that affordability is a key factor that is important to decision makers when investing in new technology for their business and plans to champion this along with the backing of credible technology and results.

Commenting on the new hirings, owner Roy Cowley said, "I've known Dale Needham for many years and have followed his progress very closely with Dermalux. His skill set has been proven out through his achievements with that organisation, resulting in many innovative product designs and the building of a very well recognised and respected brand within the medical aesthetics industry.

"Dale is the ying to my yang, what he will bring to the table contributes to a new chapter in the evolution of the 3D Aesthetics brand. He will be instrumental in spearheading many aspects of product development and device licensing, that within a short period of time will result in the launch of two new product developments – being the E-Pace, an evolvement of our existing line, which recognises advancement of pace of our technology and unique patent-pending designs. In addition, together we have developed a new exciting range called Elite MD that will represent a new division focusing on results-driven devices in the medical aesthetics field. Dale has also contributed heavily towards significant operational improvement and will be changing the scope of our ISO 13485 to virtual manufacturing, enabling significant growth with our export plans.

"In addition, Dale brings Rachel to the team, who he has worked with previously and who brings with her significant experience within the medical aesthetics market. Rachel will be directly responsible for launching our new Elite MD range and will be building a team of likeminded sales candidates beneath her throughout 2025. I know that her significant experience will contribute great value to my organisation and its new direction."

Needham has a varied background in product design and engineering, as an MBA graduate of Manchester Business School. "I chose to join 3D Aesthetics as I have always been curious and encouraged by the brand, technology and team," he added. "3D is a pioneer in the aesthetics industry, with the application of 'Blue Ocean' strategy and groundbreaking technology platforms, it was an opportunity I couldn't pass on. Having known Roy Cowley for nearly 10 years, I am proud to join the team and continue the successes of the business and look forward to meeting old and new clients as I embark on this journey. 3D offers the chance to revolutionise the industry; with the knowledge I've gained over the years, my own and shared successes, I am sure collectively we will continue to be the number one provider of aesthetic equipment in the UK and encourage all to join us on our journey."

SkinPen
BIOJUVE

REVOLUTIONISING SKIN REJUVENATION

Introducing the new SkinPen protocol with Biojuve for advanced biome boosted skin remodelling

Crown Aesthetics has unveiled a new protocol that synergises the award-winning SkinPen Precision technology with Biojuve skin biome care. This approach offers an integrative treatment that elevates skin quality and appearance, and fortifies skin health on a microbial level.

The aesthetics specialty is unmistakably headed towards treatments that embrace a holistic perspective, and Crown Aesthetics leads this charge by pioneering a new standard in skin biome care. Their patented Biojuve, in combination with SkinPen Precision (Aesthetics Awards 2024 Best Energy Device), delivers a potent formula for optimal skin remodelling. This innovative pair works to accelerate the natural healing process while minimising downtime, and reducing redness, dryness, peeling, itchiness and swelling post-procedure, presenting a groundbreaking dual strategy.

A HARMONIOUS BLEND OF INNOVATION AND CARE

The protocol seamlessly integrates Crown Aesthetics' premier innovations: SkinPen Precision skin remodelling and Biojuve skin biome care. The SkinPen Precision, the world's first FDA-cleared microneedling device, excels in activating the skin's natural regenerative processes, enhancing collagen and elastin production. The result is a noticeable improvement in skin tone, texture and elasticity to help improve the cosmetic appearance of fine lines, wrinkles, stretch marks, surgical scars, enlarged pores and pigmentation conditions (dyschromia).[1]

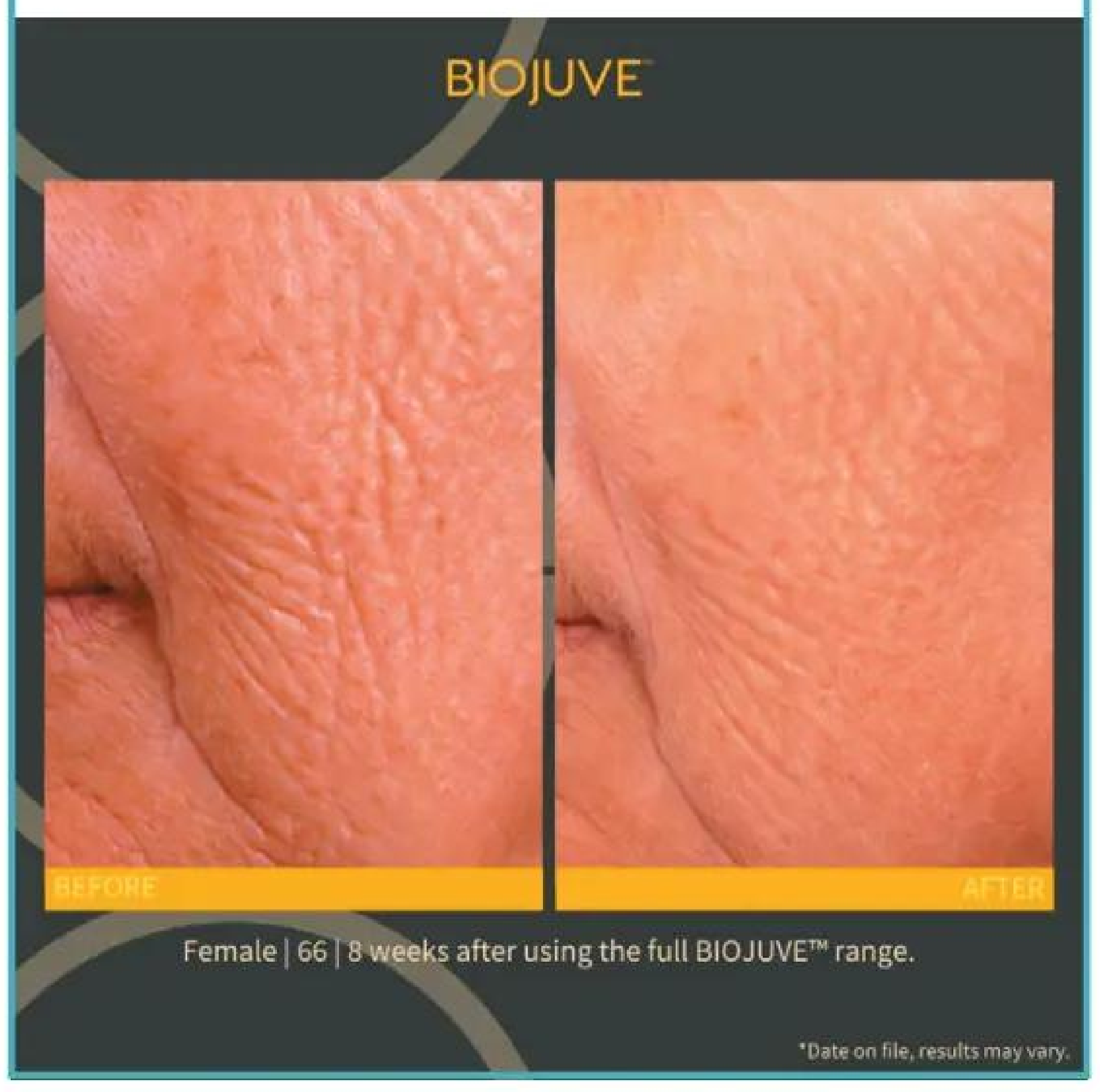
Biojuve marks a significant advance in the nurturing of the skin's microbiome. It exemplifies Crown Aesthetics' dedication to holistic skin health, promoting the beneficial bacteria that are the foundation for a robust and vibrant skin barrier. This dual-faceted approach quickens the healing process pre- and post-microneedling and bolsters the skin's overall health and resilience.

ELEVATING SKIN HEALTH WITH XYCROBE TECHNOLOGY

A core component of this new protocol is the Xycrobe technology, encapsulated within Biojuve.[1] This cutting-edge approach enhances skin health and quality by harnessing the beneficial microbes native to our skin.[1] Utilising a unique strain of C.acnes defendens, Xycrobes optimise the skin's microbiome by acting as a skin probiotic, fostering a balanced skin biome that visibly improves skin clarity, tone and texture.[1] Integrating this living microbe into the skin's existing ecosystem as pre- and post-procedure care creates a conducive environment for these improvements, highlighting the pivotal role of microbiomes in aesthetic outcomes.

Clinical studies underscore the efficacy of this approach, revealing significant aesthetic enhancements and reduced downtime when Biojuve skin biome care is incorporated into pre- and post-SkinPen Precision microneedling treatments.[1] This evidence-based approach reinforces the protocol's standing as a beacon of innovation in medical aesthetics.

BEFORE AND AFTER IMAGE



Female | 66 | 8 weeks after using the full BIOJUVE™ range.

*Date on file, results may vary.

COMPREHENSIVE BENEFITS AND INCLUSIVE CARE

This innovative protocol allows for comprehensive benefits, yielding immediate and enduring skin health and aesthetic improvements. Patients can anticipate a diminution in skin imperfections and an enhancement in skin tone and texture.[1] Moreover, this holistic methodology accommodates all skin types and tones, embodying a significant leap forward in offering personalised, non-invasive skin rejuvenation solutions[1]

By leveraging mechanical and biological innovations, Crown Aesthetics has developed therapies that promise profound and lasting benefits.

This initiative mirrors the specialty's growing preference for natural, minimally invasive beauty enhancement techniques. As comprehension of the skin's intricacy deepens, the imperative to support its inherent processes and defences becomes increasingly evident. The SkinPen Precision and Biojuve protocol is emblematic of this evolution, offering a method that complements the body's natural mechanisms.

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FIVE MARKETING *red flags*

Here are some things to look out for to safeguard your business against fraudulent marketing agencies

When it comes to marketing agencies working with aesthetic clinics, there are certain red flags that clinic owners need to be aware of. Being informed and aware of what to look out for can help you avoid falling victim to false promises in AI adverts and ensure that you are making an informed decision for your clinic's marketing strategy.

- One of the biggest red flags to watch out for is guarantees. No marketing strategy is foolproof, and anyone claiming to guarantee results is likely making false promises. If a marketing agency is making bold guarantees, it's best to proceed with caution.
- Another red flag to be wary of is anyone offering to work for free. While it may seem appealing to save money on marketing costs, there is almost always a catch. Be sure to read the fine print and fully understand what you are getting into before agreeing to any free services.
- It's essential to ask for success stories from any potential marketing agency. If they cannot provide examples of successful campaigns or client testimonials, it's a red flag that they may not be as reputable as they claim. Check their website, Google reviews, and seek feedback from other professionals in the industry.
- Be cautious of vague terminology, such as 'done for you'. Make sure you fully understand what services are included and what additional costs may be involved. Don't be afraid to ask tough questions and seek clarification on any unclear terms.
- Pressuring you into large upfront payments is another red flag to watch out for. A reputable marketing agency should be transparent about its pricing structure and should not pressure you into paying more than you are comfortable with before seeing measurable results.

It's important to take the time to thoroughly review any contracts and ask any necessary questions upfront. Seeking legal advice or consulting with other professionals in the industry can help you make an informed decision and avoid falling victim to misleading marketing tactics.

Overall, it's essential to trust your instincts and do your due diligence when working with marketing agencies for your aesthetic clinic. By being aware of these red flags and asking the right questions, you can protect your clinic from costly mistakes and ensure that you are working with a reputable agency. AM

OUT & ABOUT

SAFETY IN BEAUTY DIAMOND AWARDS 2024

Hilton Hotel, Park Lane

The annual festive event on December 7 was, as always, a glamorous evening of networking and celebrating the stars of the sector. Dr Sabika Karim was honoured to receive the 'Career Achievement' award: "Being at this event with so many peers, I'm reminded how lucky we are to work in a field where we make real, positive changes in people's lives. I firmly believe we should all continue to share our ideas, knowledge and techniques with each other; we are not in competition, we are a collaborative. I was a little shocked as I thought I was still too young for this kind of award, but in aesthetics, nobody really looks their age! I always thought these awards signified the end of a career, but this isn't my swan song. It's just the start of chapter two!"

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER WITH DR OLHA

Cleaver and Wake, Nottingham

The Beyond the Mirror initiative took centre stage once again as Angels Twelve hosted its second annual celebration. The sold-out event brought together a remarkable group of guests to embrace the concept of beauty that shines from the inside out, combining medical insights with wellness. The evening was led by Dr Olha Vorodyukhina who shared her deep expertise in enhancing patients' quality of life through innovative treatments. Guests enjoyed exquisite dining and drinks while engaging with some of the UK's leading medical and wellness professionals, who shared invaluable knowledge about holistic health, aesthetics, and self-care.

ADVANCED NUTRITION PROGRAMME NETWORKING EVENT

IIAA head office, London Bridge

International Institute for Active Ageing (IIAA) toasted the festive season and showcased its Advanced Nutrition Programme supplement brand at an exclusive networking event. Contributing editor Ellen Cummings went along to IIAA's swanky office overlooking London Bridge for the occasion, where Advanced Nutrition Programme was introduced by IIAA co-founder and managing director David Alpert, medical director Dr Gaby Prinsloo, and aesthetic doctor Dr Christine Hall. Guests were treated to delicious canapés and champagne, as well as shade matching for makeup brand Et Al and a generous Christmas gift to take home.

Do you eat your skincare?

PROMOITALIA SYMPOSIUM

1 Hotel, Mayfair

Promoitalia UK hosted a symposium for expert practitioners to explore advancements in biostimulation and laser technologies. The event unveiled the I-LASER 1470 by Promoitalia Group featuring cutting-edge products, showcasing its versatility. The symposium also featured the I-LADY, which offers rejuvenation for intimate area wellness. Throughout the day, attendees experienced expert-led discussions, and networking opportunities. Promoitalia's symposium underscored its commitment to innovation, equipping practitioners with advanced tools like the I-LASER 1470 and transformative products to redefine aesthetic medicine.

V-TECH SERUM
PROMOITALIA MEDICAL AESTHETICS
THE NEXT LEVEL

ANTEAGE BIOSOME BRUNCH

The Dorchester, London

On December 8, Dr Sabika Karim and Ian Sanderson discussed the science of biosomes and their role in regenerative aesthetics. Attendees enjoyed captivating presentations, engaging discussions and exclusive insights into this chapter of aesthetic innovation, while catching up about Safety in Beauty the night before.

AMWC SOUTHEAST ASIA

InterContinental Hotel, Bangkok

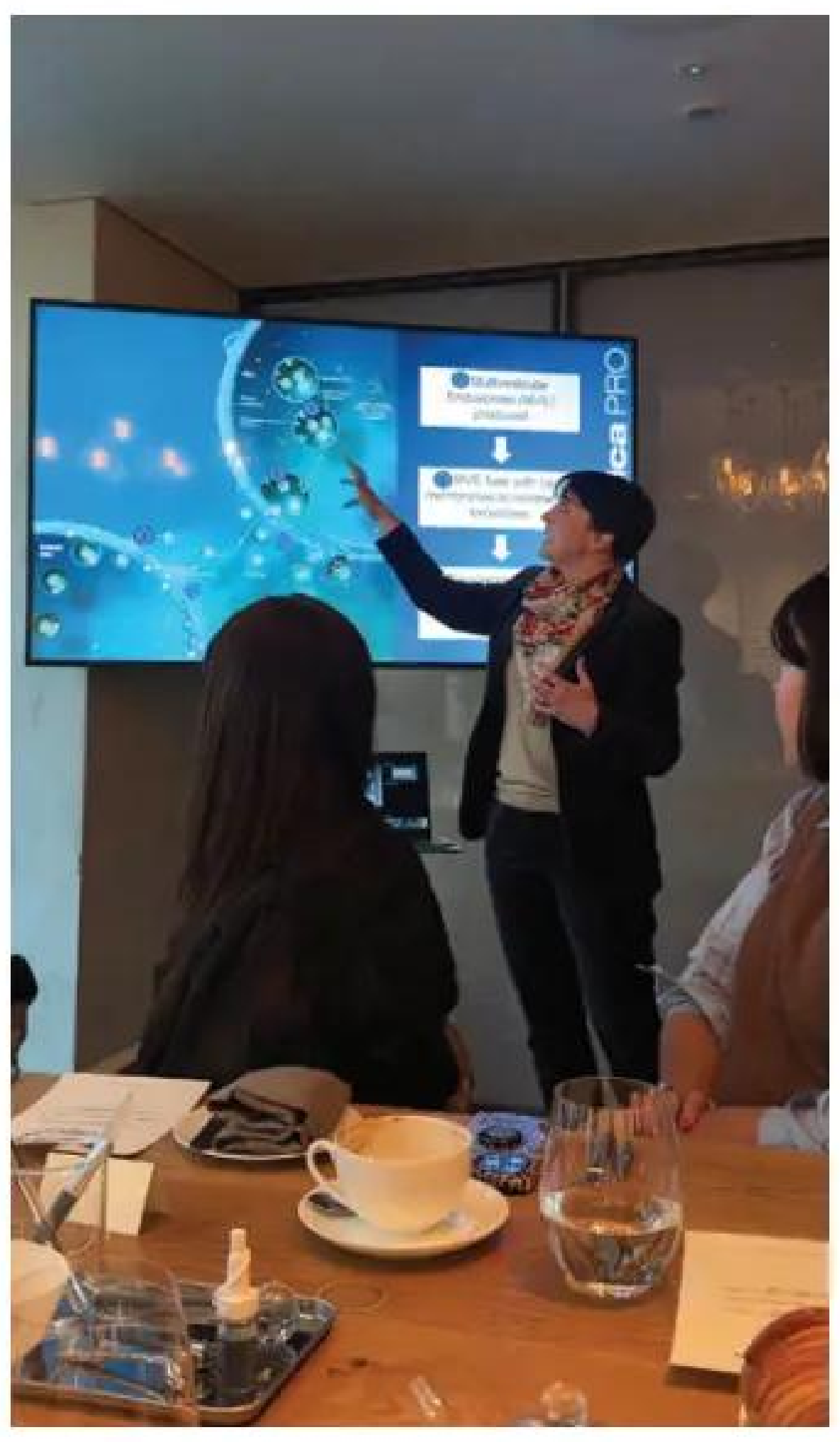
The Aesthetic and Anti-ageing Medicine World Congress (AMWC) in Southeast Asia is a fusion of Asian expertise, attracting delegates from across the globe who are keen to get the 'East meets West' educational experience that makes this conference so unique. The Aesthetic Consultant Vanessa Bird was co-moderator of the Practice Management Stage and presented her talk 'Navigating the Success Stream,' sharing insights with delegates on how to identify key opportunities for growth, before delivering a second talk 'Luxury in Minutes' the following day. Bird also attended the Faculty Dinner alongside fellow speakers Dr Jenny Doyle and Mr Richard Scawn, as well as Dr Nisha Menon and Dr Susanna Alberti who were attending for the second year.

AMWC SOUTHEAST ASIA
AESTHETIC & ANTI-AGING MEDICINE WORLD CONGRESS
NOVEMBER 21 22 23 2024

DERMALOGICA EXO BOOSTER BREAKFAST

Hide, Mayfair

Ellen Cummings attended a press breakfast with Dermalogica Pro to learn about the brand's new Exo Booster treatment and preview some of its other 2025 launches. During a nutritious breakfast, Gardner introduced the Exo Booster treatment – a vegan, bacteria-based exosome complex paired with microneedling to enhance active ingredient penetration. The treatment supports natural cell renewal, boosts vitality and promotes skin regeneration using Dermalogica's Pro Resolution Technology. Guests were also gifted the brand's latest product launch, the Multivitamin Power Recovery Cream, which combats dryness, dullness, fine lines and sagging.



dermalogica

BRAND *ambition*

Dr Medispa founder **Dr Munir Somji** talks to editor **Anna Dobbie** about how his multichannel aesthetics brand combines spa luxury with medical excellence

Founded in 2012 by Dr Munir Somji, Dr Medispa has become a leading brand in aesthetic medicine, offering innovative treatments and skincare products that combine surgical expertise, dermatology, and wellness. What began as a part-time endeavour while Dr Somji trained in the NHS has since grown into a thriving practice with three premier locations: Marylebone, Knightsbridge, and Essex.

The journey started on Harley Street with a single clinic, but Dr Medispa quickly expanded, moving to Marylebone in 2019 and later opening the Knightsbridge clinic in 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic. This expansion demonstrates Dr Somji's mission: to make aesthetics accessible and to combine cutting-edge medical treatments with a patient-centred approach.

INNOVATIVE TREATMENTS AND PHILOSOPHY

Dr Somji's holistic approach to aesthetics combines minimally invasive surgical procedures like keyhole facelifts, fat transfers, and hair transplants, with advanced non-surgical treatments. These protocols are designed to deliver exceptional results with minimal downtime, prioritising natural beauty and patient safety. He is also a trusted source for emerging technologies, introducing treatments like AgeJet, Emerald Laser and SofWave ahead of broader industry adoption.

One of Dr Somji's pioneering techniques is sculpting the face through fat transfer and non-surgical procedures, emphasising a regenerative and results-driven approach. These advancements stem from his extensive consultancy and research roles with leading companies such as Galderma and L'Oréal: "It offsets my medical practice a bit and gives me something different to do because one of my passions is teaching and research. I probably work six or seven days a week, but I pack it all in."

EDUCATION AND PATIENT-CENTRED CARE

Education is a cornerstone of Dr Somji's philosophy. With a significant online presence, including over 300,000 YouTube followers, the clinic delivers honest, evidence-based content about aesthetic trends and treatments. The content aims to guide patients worldwide, promoting safety and helping them make informed decisions.

"The YouTube channel started about five years ago and we didn't do much with it until 2021 if I'm honest," adds Dr Somji. "It tells people very plainly and simply what they can do and what the limitations are. People resonated with the content, particularly around non-surgical treatments, and it snowballed."

A COLLABORATIVE BRAND

'Dr Medispa' reflects both the medical expertise and team-based ethos of the clinic. While inspired by the American concept of 'med spas', the name emphasises the importance of comprehensive, doctor-led consultations and specialised care. "I did some of my post-surgical training, my hair transplant fellowship, in America," says Dr Somji. "We were playing around with names, and I thought, 'if we're going to do everything, it's not just a med spa'. Everybody in the clinic will see a doctor first who will analyse the patient and make their plans, then they can be directed to other, specialised staff members. That was my vision."

Dr Munir's ethos is rooted in collaboration and excellence, with a strong emphasis on professional development. All Dr Medispa staff receive extensive in-house training to ensure the highest standards of care and expertise.

This focus on team collaboration ensures patients benefit from a wide array of expertise, reinforcing the clinic's reputation for excellence: "I didn't want everyone to come to clinic to see me because I can't be a jack of all trades. There are certain things that I'm good at and certain things that I'm not so good at. The aim was to construct a team that was passionate about every small facet of the treatments they do."

Dr Munir's commitment to community is evident in his Essex clinic, which fosters a sense of belonging and connection.

DR.MEDISPA
DRMS

The clinic also boasts an impressive celebrity clientele, ranging from A-list stars to influencers, further enhancing its reputation. However, the clinic prioritises patient education over glamourisation, ensuring a focus on ethical practices and informed decision-making.

DESIGN WITH A PERSONAL TOUCH

Although Dr Medispa operates as a mini chain with three distinct clinics, each location embodies a unique design tailored to its local patient base. The unifying theme? A welcoming, family-oriented atmosphere. "The clinics aim to feel more like familiar community spaces than sterile medical facilities," adds Dr Somji. "From open waiting areas designed to foster comfort to unisex, calming colour schemes, the goal is to create an environment that is professional yet unintimidating." Gone are the imposing dark interiors of the Harley Street days, replaced with softer hues, wellness-inspired greens, and thoughtful design touches.

He goes on to explain how each clinic's personality mirrors its location: "Marylebone offers a refined, understated elegance, Essex is rooted in community warmth with family photos adorning the walls, and Knightsbridge leans into bold sophistication with brass accents and artistic flair. Despite these differences, all clinics maintain a consistent ethos of care and hospitality, reinforcing the brand's values."

A FAMILY ATMOSPHERE

Central to Dr Medispa's brand philosophy is its strong sense of family. Dr Somji runs the practice as a close-knit team with his spouse, extending their support to staff both professionally and personally. This family-like culture fosters loyalty and dedication, with many team members having grown alongside the business over the years.

"From award ceremonies to day-to-day interactions, we prioritise a supportive work environment," adds Dr Somji. "This sense of unity is reflected in how patients are welcomed and cared for, ensuring their experience is as reassuring as it is transformative."

LEADING THE WAY IN SKINCARE INNOVATION

Dr Somji's expertise in product development has culminated in the creation of a bespoke skincare brand, DrSomjiSkincare. Years in the making, the brand reflects the clinic's commitment to innovation and quality. "It incorporates extensive research, rigorous testing, and consumer trials to ensure that every product meets the highest standards," he comments. This skincare line not only serves the clinic's global audience but also offers a tangible way for patients worldwide to experience a piece of Dr Medispa.

LOOKING AHEAD: TRENDS AND ETHICAL CHALLENGES

As the aesthetics industry continues to grow, wellness and regenerative medicine are emerging as critical elements of modern aesthetics. From exosomes to advanced skin treatments like PRP and stem cell therapies, the focus is shifting toward enhancing skin health and longevity, which Dr Somji has built into his offering.

Equally important is addressing the growing influence of misinformation in the industry. Dr Medispa advocates for greater consumer education, emphasising the need for evidence-based treatments and transparency. With the rise of non-surgical and surgical procedures alike, the clinic highlights the importance of individualised, holistic approaches that consider a patient's lifestyle, wellness, and long-term goals.

FUTURE GROWTH

With nearly 50 state-of-the-art machines across its locations and plans to launch an academy for advanced training, the Dr Medispa franchise is poised for continued growth. Since its founding in 2012, Dr Medispa has continued to evolve, not only in its treatments but also in its philosophy. By 2018, the clinic had embraced an ethos of providing accurate, transparent, and ethical information to patients. This change was a pivotal move, reflecting the importance of empowering patients through education while ensuring treatments are both safe and effective.

The brand's growth has been organic, driven by the readiness of its team to take on new challenges. "While currently operating three locations, plans are in motion to expand further in suburban areas around London," adds Dr Somji. "Accessibility remains a key priority, as patients often visit multiple clinics depending on their treatment needs and schedules."

Each clinic offers specialised services – Essex provides a comprehensive range of treatments thanks to its larger space, Knightsbridge focuses on body and wellness, and Marylebone specialises in facial aesthetics. This diversity is a great example of how to expand a brand to continue to meet patients' evolving needs, while maintaining high standards of care. AM

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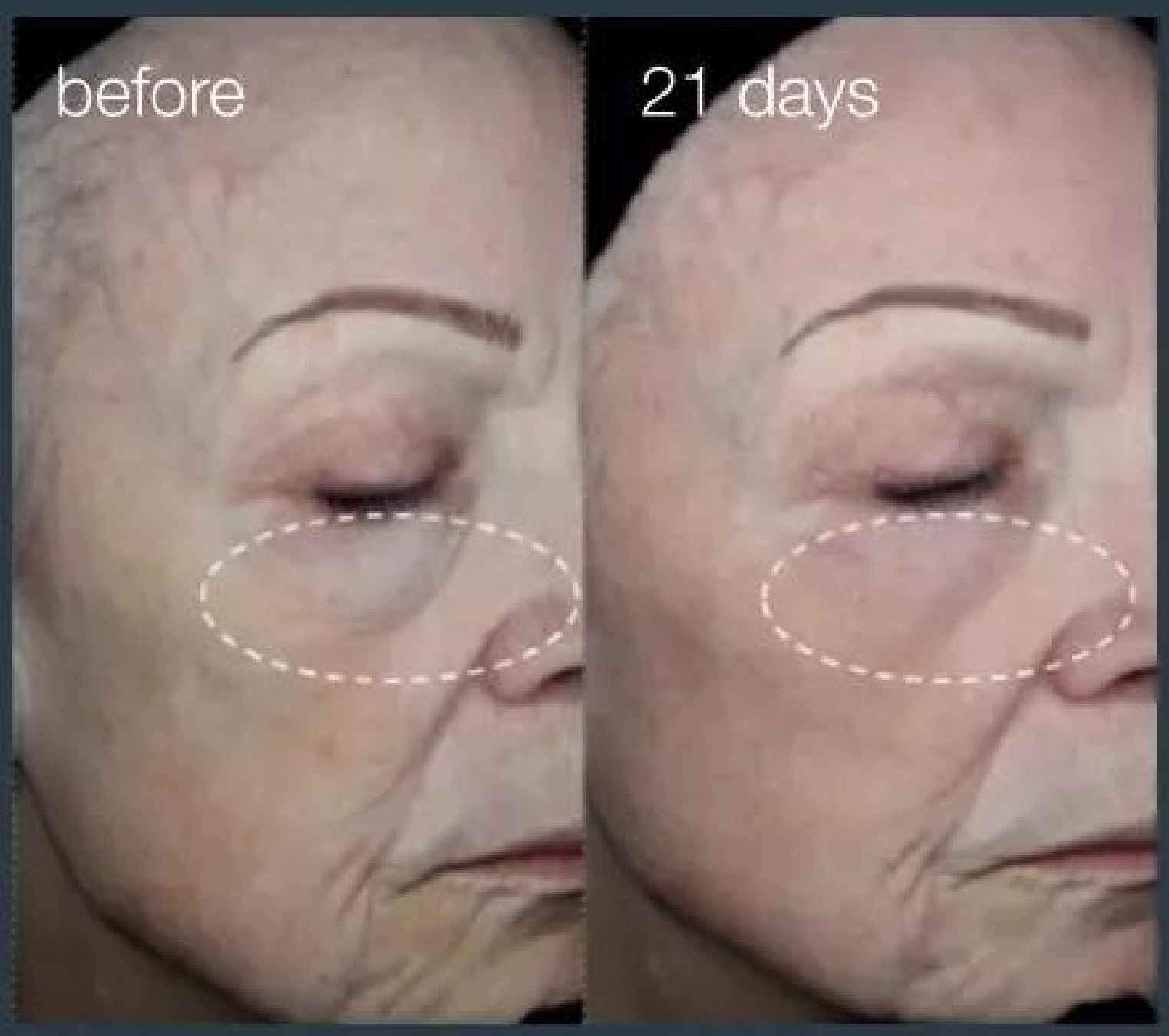
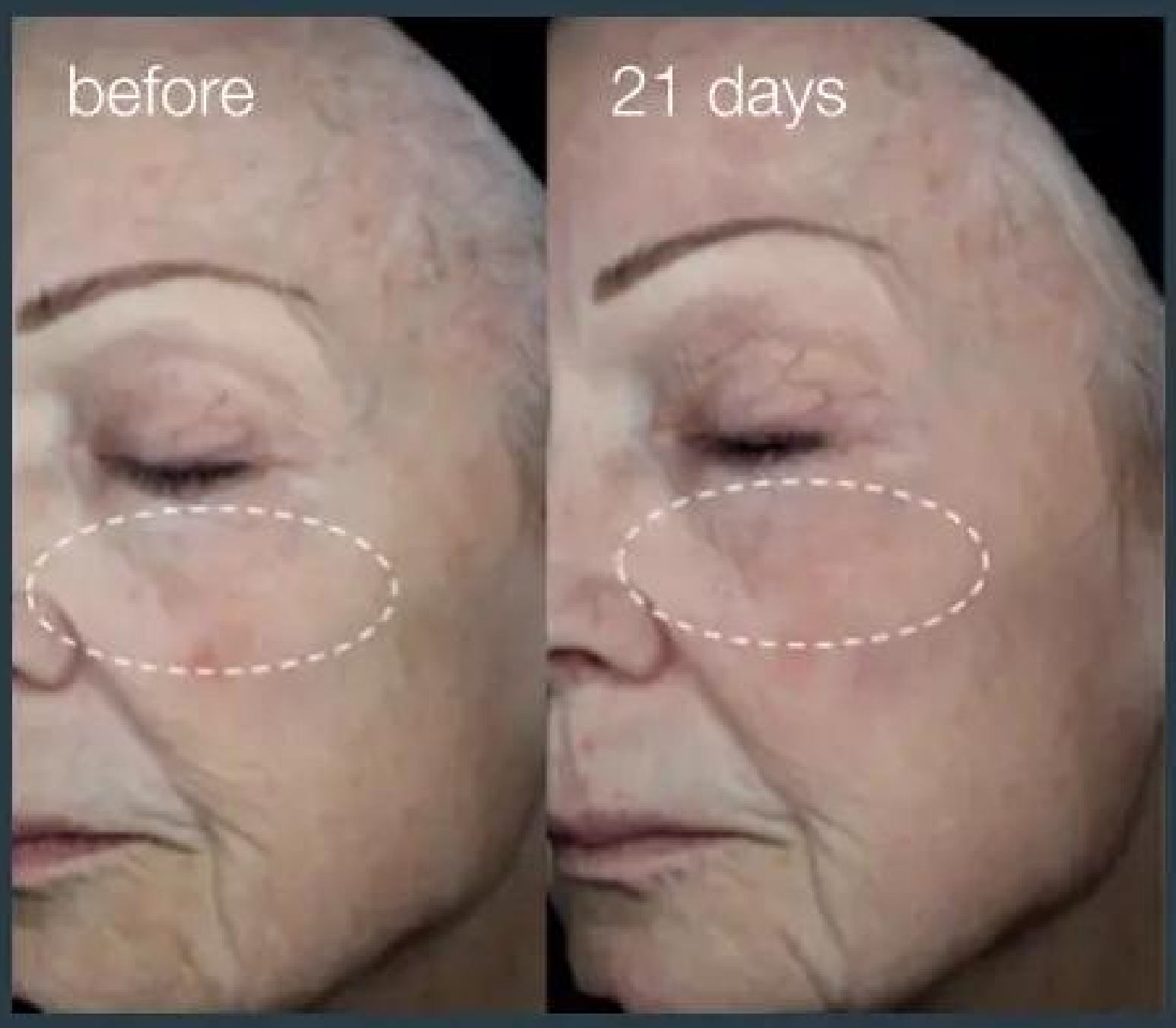

before
21 days

Tixel laser with exo booster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Dr. Vincent Wong, UK

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Dr. Marco Bartolucci, Italy

Study: Exo Booster vs. plant exosomes with fractional laser. "Exo Booster's bacterial exosomes set a new standard for clinical efficacy."

Dr. Glynis Ablon, USA

Study: Exo Booster vs. human exosomes with Tixel laser. "Exo Booster's bacterial exosomes are a powerful vegan alternative to human exosomes."

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*30 subjects - clinical study with ultraclear laser (ablative settings), RF Microneedling and Tixel. Split face method.

Polylactic Acid

Dr Paul Charlson considers whether polylactic acid is the holy grail of anti-ageing

DR PAUL CHARLSON

Dr Paul Charlson FRCGP FBCAM DRCOG DOccMed DPD is an aesthetic doctor working in London and Yorkshire. Dr Charlson is a past president of the British College of Aesthetic Medicine (BCAM) and the co-chair of the Clinical Advisory Group of the Joint College of Cosmetic Practitioners (JCCP) (UK). He is part of the Galderma faculty, which markets Sculptra, and was the lead trainer for Beauty Europe UK..

Polylactic acid is an effective, safe and long-lasting product that produces significant neo-collagen in the extracellular matrix. These products can address a large variety of aesthetic concerns. Currently, four licensed products are available in the UK: Sculptra and Lanluma (poly-l-lactic acid or PLLA), and Lenisna and Juvelook (poly-d-l-lactic or PDLLA acid). There are significant differences between the two enantiomers and each product has distinct characteristics. Despite some negative publicity in the past, these products are safe when used properly, and significant side effects are rare.

DISCUSSION

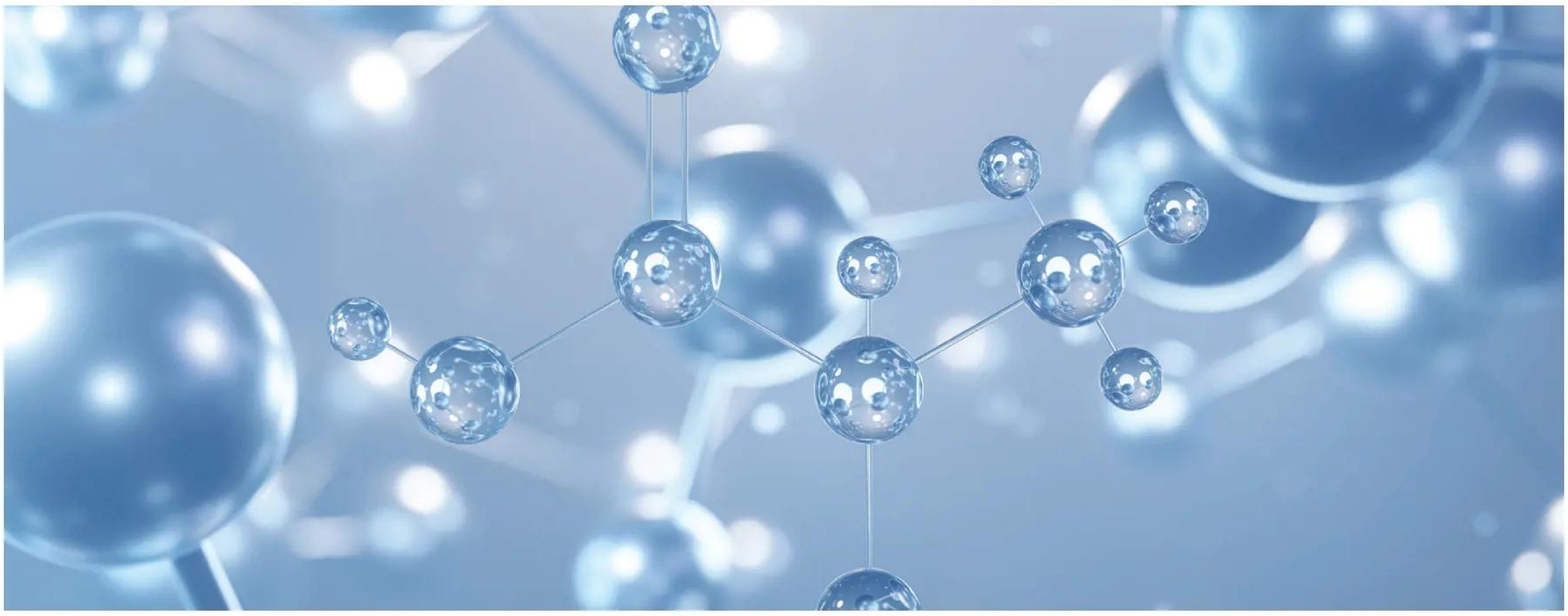
Natural long-lasting results are the holy grail of anti-ageing and polylactic acid is a product that might be classed as a holy grail treatment. Polylactic acid is a synthetic alpha hydroxy acid polymer, that is biodegradable, biocompatible, and immunologically inert.[1] It causes stimulation of neo-collagenases by triggering a foreign body reaction to the injected material, resulting in a controlled cellular inflammatory response, which activates fibroblasts to produce autologous collagen.[2] This results in a natural and semi-permanent correction of the facial volume loss associated with ageing. Polylactic acid is recommended for increasing skin tightness secondary to ageing. It is effective for reducing the appearance of wrinkles, creases, scars, and other changes caused by ageing and volume loss. It is injected into supraperiosteal, subcutaneous, and subdermal layers to produce optimal results in facial rejuvenation by improving skin quality, firmness, and facial contour.[3]

ARE ALL POLYLACTIC ACID PRODUCTS THE SAME?

As mentioned, polylactic acid is available in the UK as injectable products Lanluma and Sculptra (PLLA) and Lenisna and Juvelook (PDLLA). There are some differences between the two substances: PLLA is an irregularly shaped particle 40-65um across and is combined with methylcellulose. PDLLA is a spherical particle with micropores 10-70um across and is combined with hyaluronic acid (HA)[4] PDLLA has a more significant volume-restoring effect because PDLLA occupies a larger volume than PLLA for the same weight, due to its microporous spherical structure.[5] PDLLA demonstrates superior mechanical stability and biocompatibility compared to poly(d-lactic acid) (PDLA) and PLLA, primarily due to its unique structure. Firstly, it prevents the formation of large crystalline regions typical of PDLA and PLLA. Crystalline regions can render polymers brittle and prone to cracking under stress. In contrast, the lack of crystallinity in PDLLA results in a more uniform and flexible material, enhancing its mechanical stability and reducing susceptibility to mechanical failure.

Secondly, PDLLA degrades in a more controlled and predictable manner compared to the more crystalline PDLA and PLLA. The homogeneous distribution of D- and L-monomers in PDLLA allows for a uniform hydrolytic degradation process. This controlled degradation is crucial in biomedical applications where the timing of polymer breakdown affects the release of therapeutic agents and the healing process.

Thirdly, the amorphous nature of PDLLA also contributes to its better biocompatibility. Crystalline polymers can elicit more significant inflammatory responses due to the presence of sharp crystalline fragments during degradation. In contrast, a more gradual and uniform degradation of PDLLA produces smoother degradation products, less likely to provoke an adverse immune response. Additionally, PDLLA's degradation products, primarily lactic acid, are naturally metabolised by the body, further enhancing its biocompatibility.[6]



Juvelook has a smaller particle size (20-50um) and can be used periocularly and intradermally as a skin booster, which makes it unique. A difference in the volumisation effect of PDLLA compared with PLLA has been observed.[7] PDLLA, due to its structure, creates an earlier volume effect which, after several months, stays static. PLLA has a less early effect but catches up with PDLLA over time. Later results, although no comparative studies have been performed, are probably similar. Polylactic acid preparations are not the same and it seems likely that PDLLA may confer some clinical advantages, although as yet this has not been demonstrated by comparative studies.

DOES POLYLACTIC ACID WORK?

Polylactic acid is proven to create collagen and there are numerous studies which demonstrate aesthetic improvements as a result.

There have been high levels of patient satisfaction with the results of PLLA (Sculptra) treatment in both healthy and HIV-infected individuals.[8,9]

There have been many studies demonstrating the safety and efficacy of PLLA.[2,10] Indeed most of the studies have been conducted using Sculptra.

One study showed an increase in type 1 collagen after six and nine months following three sessions at monthly intervals of PLLA.[11] A split study on the upper knee demonstrated increased collagen at day 56 after three treatments, lasting at least until day 168.[12] Another study showed results of volumisation of sunken cheeks in Asians 24 months after three sessions of treatment with PLLA with a high degree of patient satisfaction.[13] Interestingly, in a split face study, there was no difference in collagen production at 12 weeks between one cheek being injected at weeks zero, four and eight and one at four and eight.[14]

One study found the effect of PDLLA equal to that of HA filler after 24 weeks.[15] Another showed significant improvement in dorsum of hands with PDLLA.[16] A study using PDLLA showed the biostimulatory effect of increasing elastic and collagen fibres after one week and increasing more later.[17]

One study of Juvelook (PDLLA) showed significant improvement with two to three sessions creating increased collagen and elastic fibres with superficial dermal injections.[5]

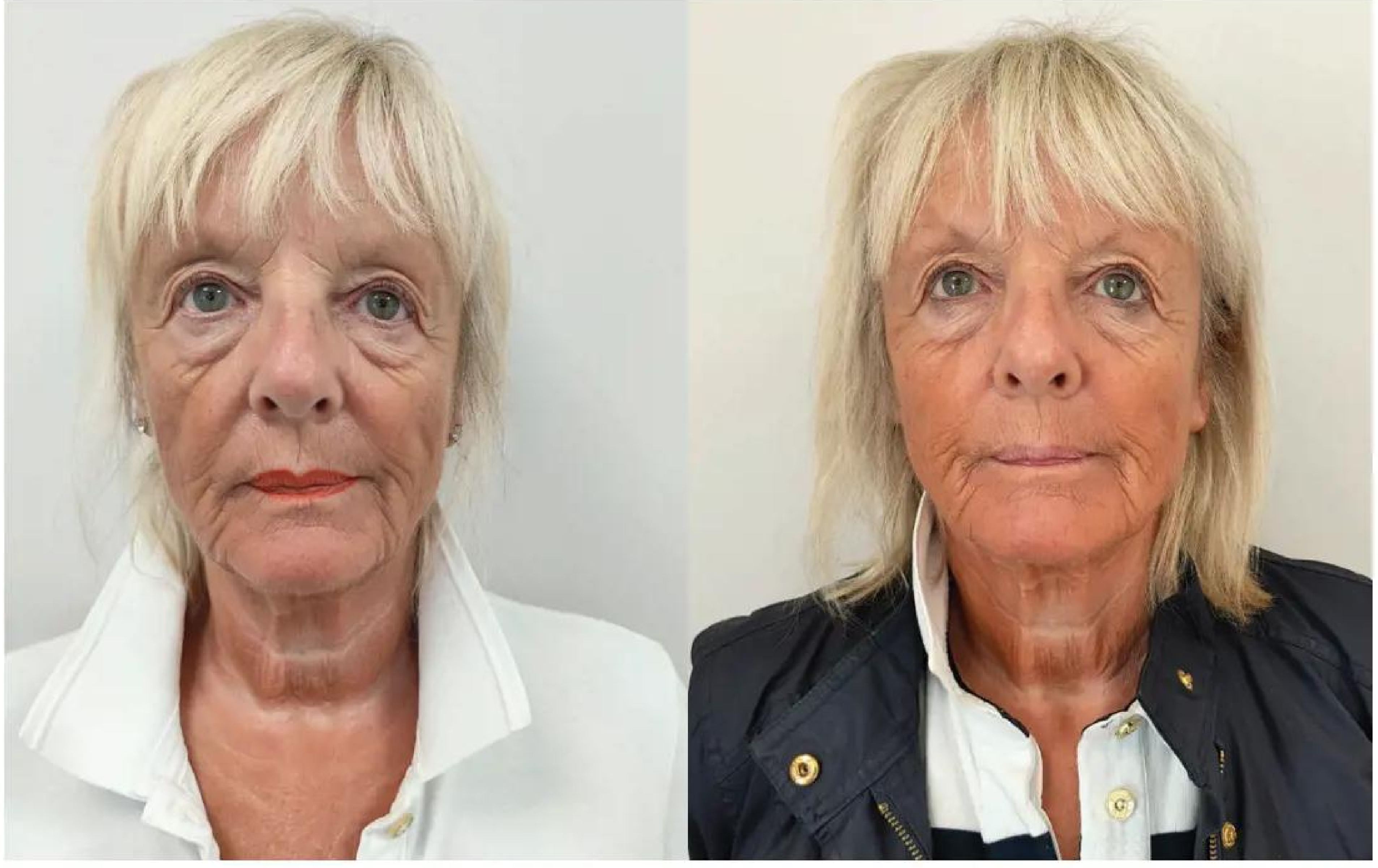
It appears that all polylactic acid products have a significant effect on skin rejuvenation usually requiring two to three sessions of treatment. There are more studies relating to Sculptra than Lanluma or the PDLLA products, which is related to its significantly longer existence in the market.

There are no comparative studies of the products, nor consistency of method of administration or treatment protocol. For these reasons, further research is required to develop protocols.

WHAT DILUTION SHOULD I USE?

Currently, there are no papers comparing the dilution of products. However, the dilution recommended for Sculptra is 9ml (8ml water and 1ml lidocaine) and Lenisna (PDLA) 16-20ml (15-19ml water + 1ml-2ml lidocaine). Juvelook, a smaller particle size PDLA, is 8ml (7ml water plus 1ml lidocaine) while Lanluma is 16ml -20ml (15ml water plus 1-4ml lidocaine). Saline may be preferable to dilute PDLLA due to the osmolarity of the product.

More concentrated products (less than 8ml) appear to increase the risk of nodule formation with Sculptra.[18]



▲ **Before** ▲ **After**

WHAT TECHNIQUES SHOULD BE EMPLOYED?

There have been consensus papers suggesting techniques employed to inject polylactic acids.[19,20] There are several considerations. The age of the patient and the amount of volume loss are important. Most treatments with volume products use a cannula. Juvelook is often delivered with a needle or mesogun or with a 27g cannula for the periocular area.

Over-60s

For the over-60s, a multi-layered approach is best to restore bony structure and treat both the deep fat and sub-dermal layers. For heavy faces, it is best to look for areas of volume loss and concentrate on lifting the mid and upper face behind the ligament line.

40s and 50s

The areas to be concentrated on are patient dependant but injection into the temple and malar fat often provides lift and volume with a mixture of products, such as PLLA and HA to rejuvenate the neck and decolletage.

Younger patients

There is less volume loss in these patients. Most injections will be sub-dermal to subcutaneous and will be more targeted to specific areas dictated by patient requirements.

WHAT ARE THE APPLICATIONS OF THESE PRODUCTS?

Facial rejuvenation

Sculptra, Lanluma and Lenisna are all products designed to be used for volumisation of the face by creating a subclinical inflammatory response, leading to collagen deposition in the extracellular matrix, creating a controlled, long-lasting volumisation and reduction of fine wrinkles.[21] Juvelook is used mainly as a skin booster and for the periocular area due to its smaller particle size.

Neck and decolletage

These areas are often difficult. In patients with thin skin, it is sometimes useful to treat initially with Juvelook intradermally, then follow up with a more volumising product using a cannula. One study described successful treatment with polylactic acid (PLLA) in the decolletage area.[22] Another study also described treatment with good satisfaction in the decolletage area.[23]

Use of cannulae is likely to lead to less bruising and is favoured. Juvelook can be introduced intradermally with a needle.

Other body areas

These products (Sculptra, Lanluma and Lenisna) can be used for a variety of body areas to create more volume and improved elasticity. The dilution is usually 20ml in most large areas such as the buttocks. A study described treatment using polylactic acid for body contouring.[24]

Commonly treated areas are buttocks, abdomen, upper arms, knees and hands.

Acne scarring

The treatment of atrophic acne scars using both PLLA and PDLLA is well established.[25] Using a needle to inject under the scar is effective, usually two to three sessions at six to eight-week intervals, although there is no consensus on what the best protocol is.

One study described the treatment of atrophic acne scars with a needle-free injection with PDLLA in acne scars with high-level patient satisfaction and this is likely to be the future direction of travel.[26]

Another study used polylactic acid combined with radiofrequency (RF) microneedling to produce superior results to RF microneedling alone in atrophic acne scars.[27]

While polylactic acid alone is useful in treating acne scarring, the use of combination treatments is likely to produce optimal results.

Stretch marks

One study described the successful use of PDLLA using laser-induced microjet injection to improve stretch mark appearance.[5] Another described the successful use of PLLA in stretch marks.[26]

Cellulite

Cellulite is characterised by topographic alterations of the surface relief of the skin with depressed areas due to thick subcutaneous

septae and raised zones due to the projection of underlying fat to the surface of the skin. This can be treated with subcutaneous injection of polylactic acid.[8]

IS POLYLACTIC ACID SAFE?

No product is 100% safe, but, with correct techniques and dilutions, unwanted effects can be reduced. In a Brazilian study, complication rates with PLLAs were found to be lower than those for HA fillers with the main issue being nodules. The rate of nodule formation was three times greater in non-physicians compared with physicians.[29] This might suggest that technique is important.

VASCULAR OCCLUSION

This remains a concern with both fillers, calcium hydroxyapatite and polylactic acid. Only HA fillers can be dissolved, which reduces their risk of long-term sequalae. Use by large cannulae and careful slow injection is the best policy. There have been no reports of vascular occlusion with Juvelook due to its small particle size.

NODULES

There are two main types of nodule. Both are rarely seen following injection of polylactic acid.

Granuloma, which is an exaggerated inflammatory response that occurs six to 24 months after injection, tends to grow and cause skin discolouration. Histological conformation is required.[30]

True nodules are anomalous accumulations of product due to bad technique or the action of muscles leading to accumulation. They tend to occur one to two months after injection. One study described the techniques to avoid nodules with PLLA, namely massage for several days and deeper injection.[31] It is not necessary to massage either Juvelook or Lenisna, although directly after injection, it is sensible to ensure even distribution of product by gentle massage. Another study found no difference in treatment effect or nodule formation in PLLA following massage.[32]

Treatment of nodules is usually injection with saline and steroids or surgical removal.[33] PDLLA has a glass transition (when a substance becomes malleable) temperature of 38-39 degrees Celsius, whereas PLLA it is 60 degrees Celsius. Use of RF microneedling can create a 39 degree environment in the skin, demonstrated resolution of a PDLLA (Lenisna) using an RF device.[34]

CONCLUSION

Polylactic acid in its various forms is an effective, safe and long-lasting product. It produces significant collagen within the extra-cellular matrix and has multiple uses within aesthetic medicine. It takes eight to 12 weeks to start to produce collagen. Each product on the UK market differs. PLLA in the form of Sculptra has a longer track record of use. PDLLA may confer some advantages being more biocompatible and producing volume earlier. No comparative studies have been performed.

The glass transformation temperature of PDLLA should make nodule resolution easier. There is no consensus as to the volume of diluent required but 16-20ml may be optimum. Proper reconstitution of the product and correct technique and placement will help to reduce nodule formation.

Juvelook is a product unique in the UK. Being a smaller particle, it can used intradermally and periocularly and has no reported nodules.

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Menopause support within aesthetics

Dr Trish Davis considers the implications within our clinical fields

Listening to the stories I'm told in the relaxed environment of my aesthetics clinic, I hear all day from women who say that they look and feel different, that work is a nightmare and that things are falling apart at home.

I have spent many years working as a GP with specialist women's health training and witnessed poor perimenopause and menopause care. There are reasons behind this catastrophic retrograde step in medical care, dating back to around 2001 with regards to the safety of hormone replacement therapy (HRT) and breast cancer risk that it has now been superseded by.

There is virtually no menopause training in medical school or even in the various doctor speciality training areas unless you decide to take a proactive approach as an individual clinician. As an inner-city female GP, women's health was the core of my job for 24 years.

Menopause symptoms are not always clinically obvious as menopause, and women can be profoundly affected both at home and in the workplace.

As well as being a GP specialising in women's health, I have been an advanced medical aesthetics practitioner since 2017. During these longer private aesthetics appointments, women would tell me about how they were feeling in themselves as I did their injectable treatment, and it was even more apparent that the structure of the NHS GP appointments (that I then worked the very next day) did not provide these patients with a forum to be managed effectively at all.

This is due to the perfect storm of the condition (complex), limitations on the practical patient pathways provided (10 minutes) and lack of training (not an NHS priority), combined with a fear of using HRT due to out-of-date research (mentioned above).

Primary care doctors are physically unable to spend the time that is often needed to manage and support these patients in the 10 minutes allowed, and they are not supported in training to be able to adequately unpick the complexities of these presentations and then manage and direct the intricate medical management that these women so often require.

The fact that oestrogen deficiency affects the entire female body means that women experience a multitude of symptoms including effects on hair and skin. However, no two women are the same in how they experience the hormonal transition. As a result, their symptoms are then not always attributed to oestrogen deficiency and can be misdiagnosed as other conditions including mental health, or, even worse, dismissed completely, which is common. Patients often present to me feeling angry and distressed at how they have been managed previously.

I knew that I could make a difference in the care of women, and that I would find it fascinating and worthwhile. It was therefore an obvious and natural progression for me to become a menopause specialist and integrate this into my aesthetics, clinic which focuses on positive ageing.

POSITIVE AGEING

As a result of the nature of the condition, menopause care requires a comprehensive approach to the whole person. In my private clinic, I have created a service to ensure that women have the time to explain how they feel so that we can explore the cause and plan solutions that may or may not be hormone-related.

Not every symptom that a 'middle-aged woman' experiences is going to be due to menopause and this is where some danger lies, as these patients are vulnerable. The very nature of the way that a woman feels during perimenopause and menopause may encourage her to seek aesthetic treatments that she wouldn't normally ask for in an attempt to feel better about herself.

The impact of not assessing and managing these symptoms in an appropriate way (and this doesn't always mean HRT) can

be catastrophic on careers and relationships, as the menopause can go on for 10-15 years or more and affect sexual function, cognition, mood, skin and hair, joints and urinary tract to name only a few of the symptoms. The menopause also puts women at increased risk of chronic illness, like cardiovascular disease.

Experiencing menopause earlier than usual is essentially life-threatening. For example, osteoporosis is a condition that can end lives due to the fractures that happen as a result. I see many women who are sent away by their GP, who told them that they are "too young" to be menopausal. What if it could shorten this patient's life, due to the missing key hormone, such as oestrogen, that is so vital for female bone health? This must at the very least be excluded as a possibility. It is not OK to send women away without excluding this possibility properly.

I hear patients say "The doctor said I am too young for HRT" all of the time. This may be true, but they have often not been clinically assessed which genuinely shocks me. Women with early menopause are more likely to need support from aesthetics clinics because of the loss of oestrogen at an earlier age and the consequences on their skin and soft tissue structures.

AN AWARENESS OF MENOPAUSE

I think that an awareness of menopause is useful in aesthetics clinics, but, due to the lack of UK regulation that we all worry about, one concern is that these patients are at risk of receiving advice on things like expensive supplements that don't have any evidence to support their claims. There is potential for some clinics to capitalise here, especially in socio-economically deprived areas, selling products and treatments that are branded for menopause that simply don't work.

Expectation management about aesthetic treatments is important as skin and hair treatments may not be as effective without HRT or a normal iron or thyroid hormone level, for example.

Hyperpigmentation can be hormonally influenced so an awareness of the physiological changes and hormones that the patient is already taking is key. Hormones may need to be swapped or stopped. For example, I have seen many women on oestrogen who then develop melasma.

All women deserve to have their symptoms evaluated and to feel validated. They do not want to feel unwell and this natural life event does exactly that. I see women who feel utterly dreadful, as their high-powered city job is at genuine risk and their family life is in turmoil. Hormones are very powerful and we must listen to what women are telling us and help to work out the various solutions available, including lifestyle changes.

Let us avoid providing the wrong help by not offering women expensive unrealistic aesthetic treatments or products and sending them to the wrong medical specialist and clogging up systems already under pressure, overusing mental health medications and almost encouraging women to be out of work or physically harmed due to apathy of the NHS to direct resources towards this inevitable consequence of ageing. This would surely save money elsewhere.

We need more education for patients who don't know what is happening to their bodies and lives.

Aesthetics clinics run by medically trained professionals are perfectly placed to educate, support and signpost women to the right lifestyle interventions or treatments for them. However, we need education, support and training for the staff and employers.

Structuring the initial questionnaire in an aesthetics clinic is one key way to understanding why women are presenting at that time, what direction should be taken, and in what order. Patients love honesty. Sending them to a doctor before administering soft tissue filler is good practice and good for business as we build trust.

Aesthetics doctors can indeed support the NHS clinicians who want to help but who feel overwhelmed with the other demands placed upon them. In our clinics, we have more time to simply listen. Unfortunately, the GP appointment is still only going to be 10 minutes long and, for many of these patients, time is the key. The price will continue to be paid by society as a whole if we don't get this right, so we can do our bit.

HRT is not the answer to everything. We are here to advise and ensure informed consent with all of the options on the table. Let's keep our women healthy and happy. This will keep workplaces, families and the person in the middle of it all happier, living longer and taking fewer resources from NHS services by getting our women the right help, which is not necessarily a bill for something that says "meno" on the label.

CASE EXAMPLE

A 57-year-old lady came for a menopause consultation appointment.

She had a past medical history of ischaemic heart disease and gastric bypass surgery and a BMI of 28.2.

Presenting symptoms

Cold intolerance, feeling hot at night, insomnia, aching joints, low libido, recurrent urinary tract infections, thinning hair, and low mood. All of these symptoms were apparently getting worse and her self-esteem was low.

Hormone management

Continuous combined HRT was prescribed transdermally with micro-ionised progestogen and vaginal oestrogen with dose adjustment review at three, six and nine months.

Lifestyle

This was addressed and changes were made with the elimination of alcohol which was previously over recommended limits as she was drinking to feel better. She felt able to exercise once stabilised on HRT and began weight training and walking.

Blood tests

Low ferritin and folate were corrected and hair quality began to improve in the following months.

BMI

This was then addressed with the injectable weekly Semaglutide. BMI reduced from 28.2 to 23.1 with a weight loss of 14kg. This was then stopped as the patient was happy with her weight.

Aesthetic assessment

After correction of hormone balance, ferritin correction, cardiovascular risk reduction and lifestyle adjustment, on examination, she had significant volume loss, fine lines, mild hyperpigmentation and sagging. She was using high-street skincare products that contained no active ingredients and SPF was in her foundation.

An OBSERV scan showed hyperpigmentation, blocked pores and an impaired skin barrier.

Skincare

Initially, a new medical-grade skincare plan was made including Obagi vitamin C, SPF 50 and 1% retinol along with lighter moisturiser and exfoliating/cleansing products.

Volume loss and skin quality

A plan was also made for facial rejuvenation. Because of the severity of volume loss and poor structure, I initially used Juvederm Vycross soft tissue fillers for the face. In addition, she had a non-surgical rhinoplasty and lip rejuvenation.

HarmonyCa was then used for lack of skin firmness and loss of collagen on two occasions to the sub and deep dermis for skin bioregeneration.

Botulinum toxin was also injected into the upper face.

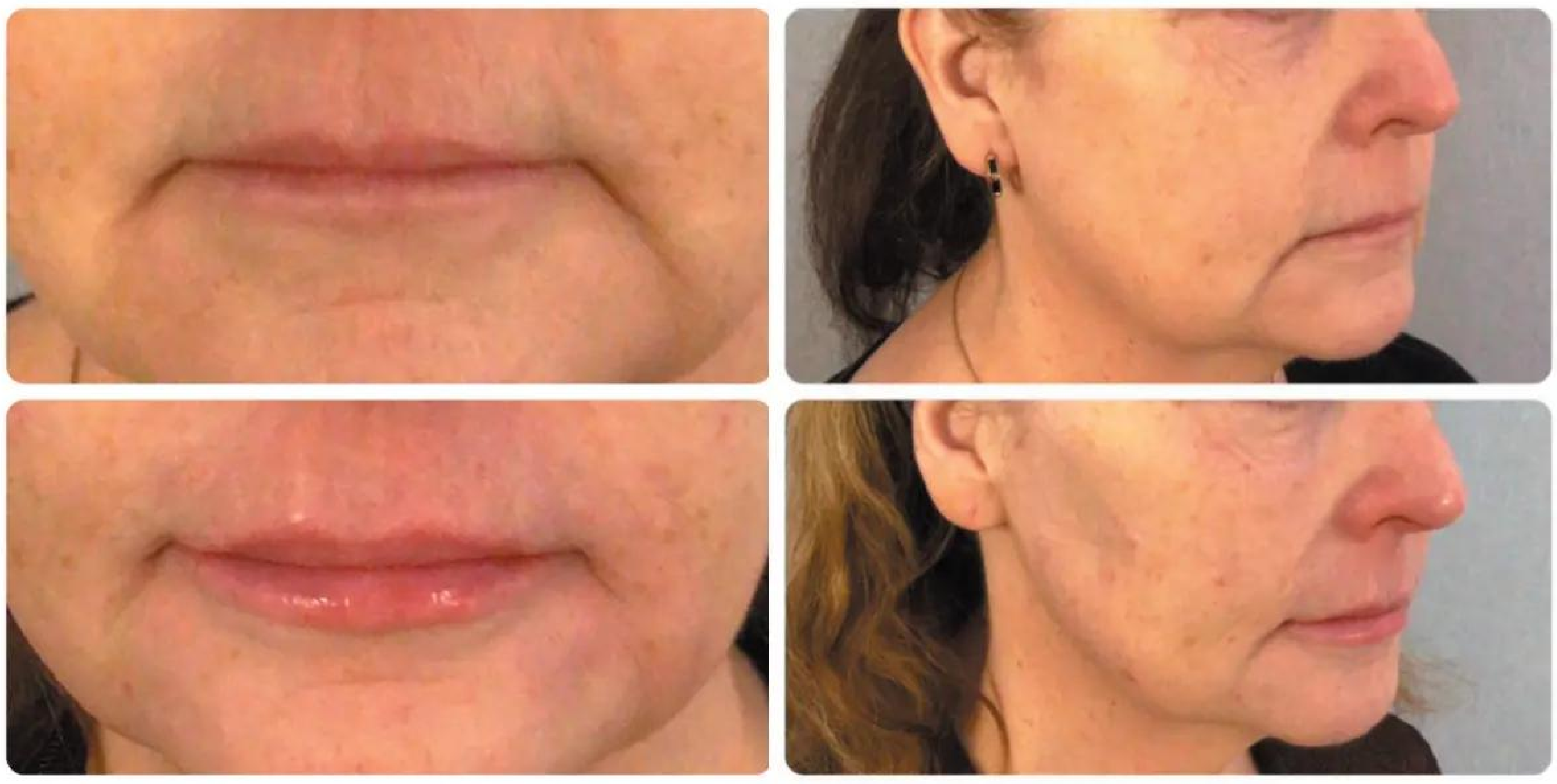
In total, I treated her with 12ml of Juvederm soft tissue filler plus two sessions of HarmonyCa.

I hope that this case clearly portrays my belief that we can achieve great outcomes in medical aesthetics clinics, but to truly manage a patient in mid-life we need to think about so much more.

The order in which patients present to us is to be respected but, with a thorough initial assessment, the direction and order of management can be negotiated.

One thing to think about is the fact that this lady's ferritin was low and, if this had been missed, then she could have been asked to try scalp treatments that were unnecessary and expensive. In my experience, correction of factors like ferritin is required alongside HRT to optimise it and so this is why medical knowledge is so important.

In the end, I had a lady who felt better systemically and who was pleased with her aesthetic treatments and told me that her confidence had been boosted. This is why I do what I do!



DR TRISH DAVIS

Dr Trish Davis is the founder of Rebalance Your Life, a private specialist clinic in Newcastle upon Tyne, combining hormone and aesthetic approaches to positive ageing. Dr Davis is an expert in complex menopause care and has the Certificate in Menopause Care from the British Menopause Society. In addition, she offers treatment to men for testosterone level assessment and replacement with follow-up and monitoring. She can address aesthetic requirements for her patients with the use of advanced medical regenerative aesthetic procedures.

BEAUTOLOGY EXPANDS OFFERINGS TO INCLUDE NEW DEVICES

In addition to providing used and refurbished lasers, the company has expanded into new equipment sales and distribution

UK aesthetic laser and equipment service provider Beautology has expanded its offerings to include brand-new devices. Founded in 2012, the company has become a key player in the industry, with director John Isaac leading the charge with extensive experience dating back to 2001.

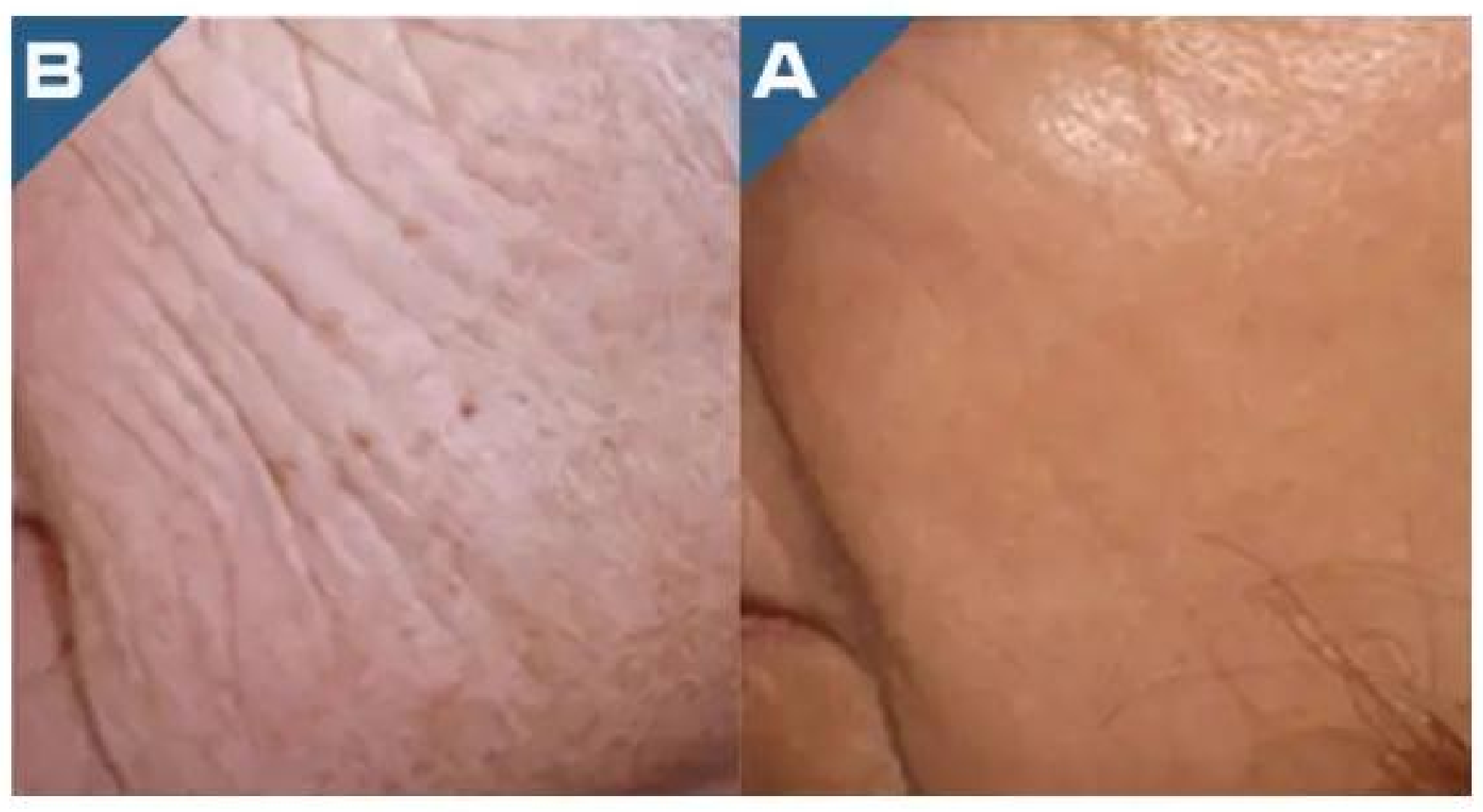
With a team boasting over 50 years of combined experience, Beautology is known for its expertise in servicing and repairing a wide range of devices, including aesthetic and medical lasers, IPL systems, and high-end cosmetic capital equipment. The company takes pride in its engineering team and the vast range of stock, consumables, and accessories it carries for top brands in the industry.

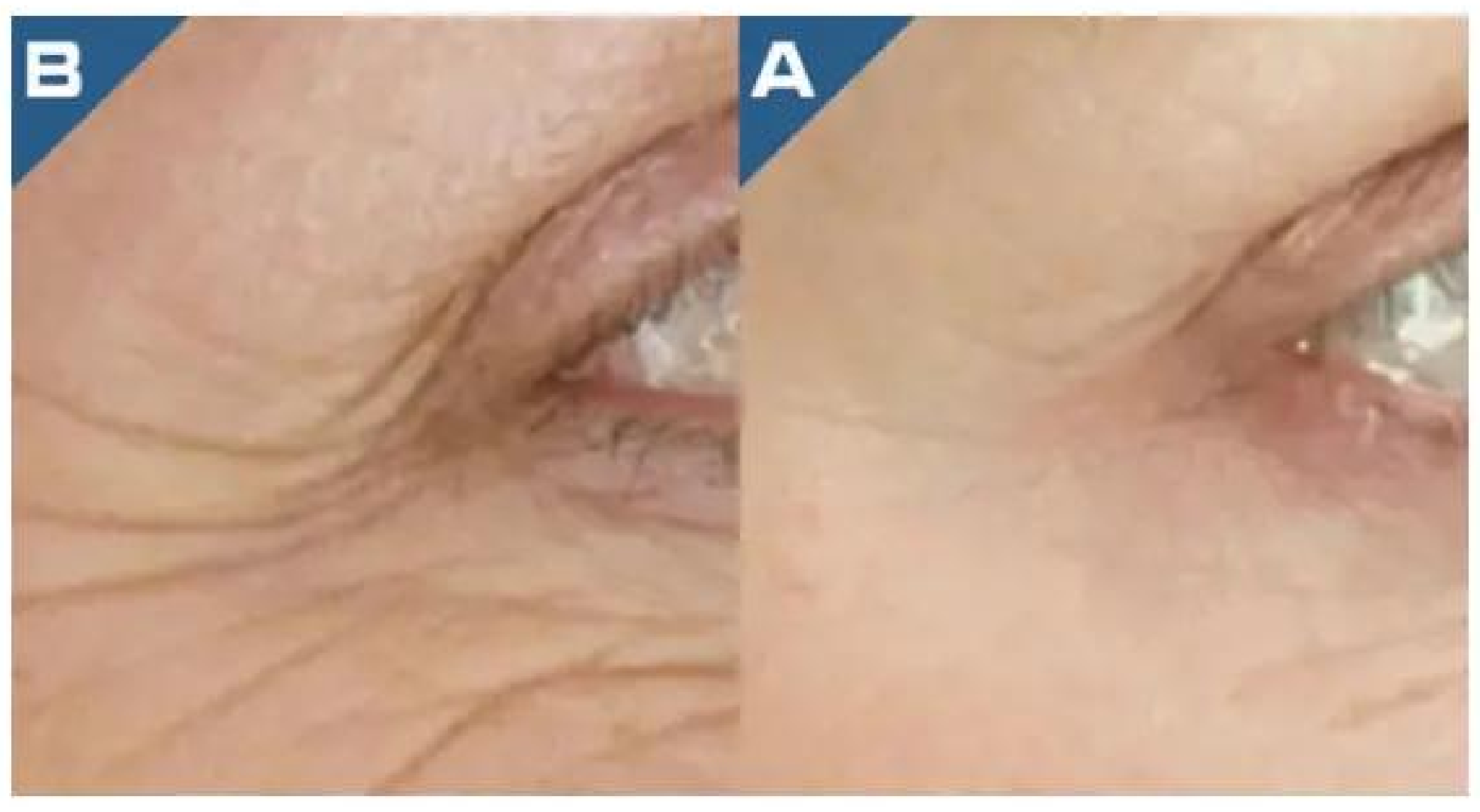
The company has forged strong partnerships with leading manufacturers such as Bison Medical, AMI, and Quanta, allowing them to offer top-quality equipment at realistic prices.

Beautology's mission is simple: to provide customers with high-spec equipment backed by exceptional service. Whether clients need a YAG/Alexandrite laser for hair removal, a pico-second or Q-switched laser for tattoo removal, or a CO_2 laser, Beautology has the solution. To support its mission, the company has partnered with highly knowledgeable experts in the medical laser industry, including Jon Wilson and Jon Warren.

The key to Beautology's success lies in its commitment to customer support. The company strives to build long-lasting relationships with clients and help grow their businesses through the sales and support of reliable equipment and expert service. With its new line of brand-new devices, Beautology is poised to continue leading the way in the UK's aesthetic laser and equipment industry.

BEFORE AND AFTER IMAGES





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FaceTite Turbo: A minimally invasive handpiece with a rigid cannula for enhanced control, precision, and safety in small delicate tissue zones.

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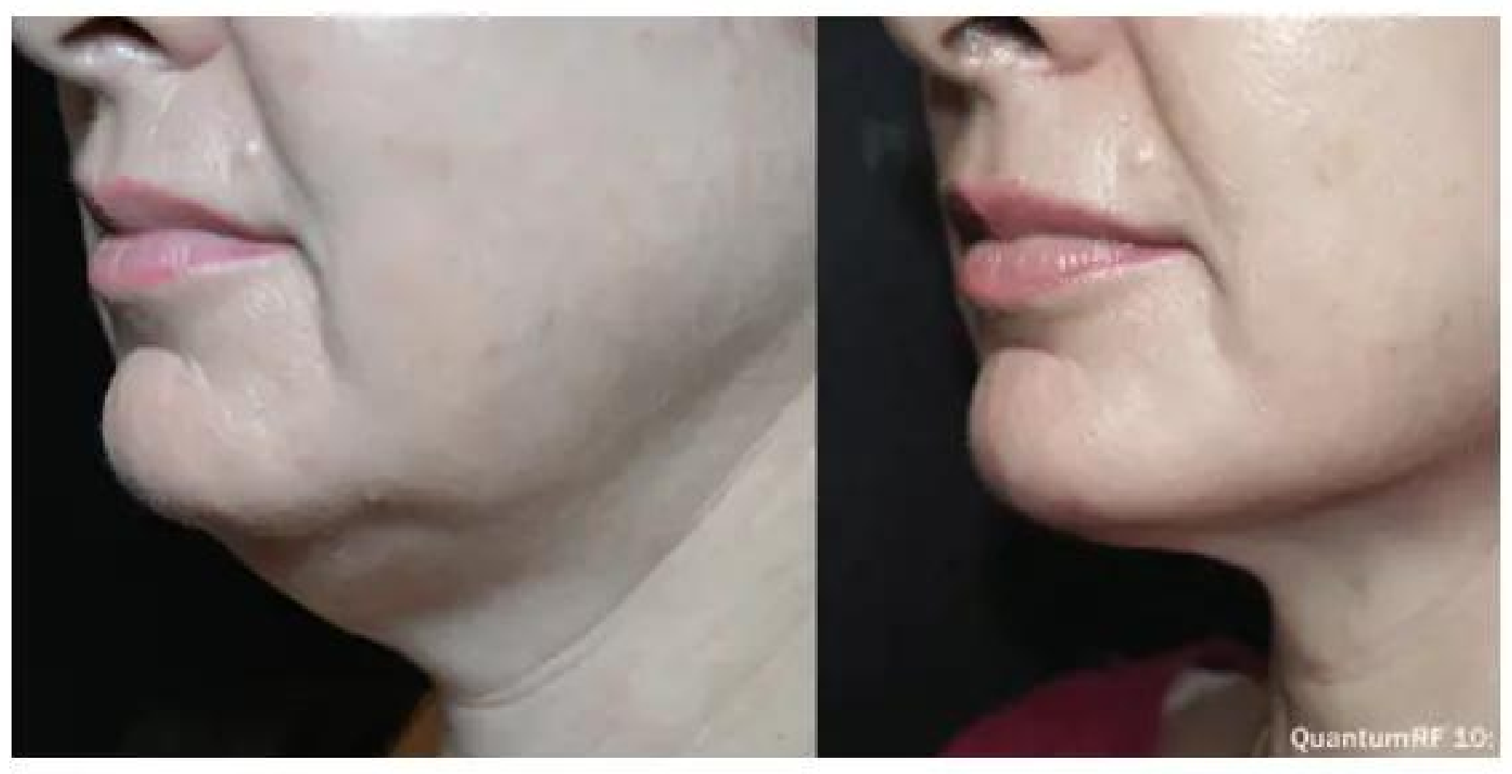
FaceTite: Designed for small body areas, FaceTite leverages RFALpower for safe and effective subdermal treatment.



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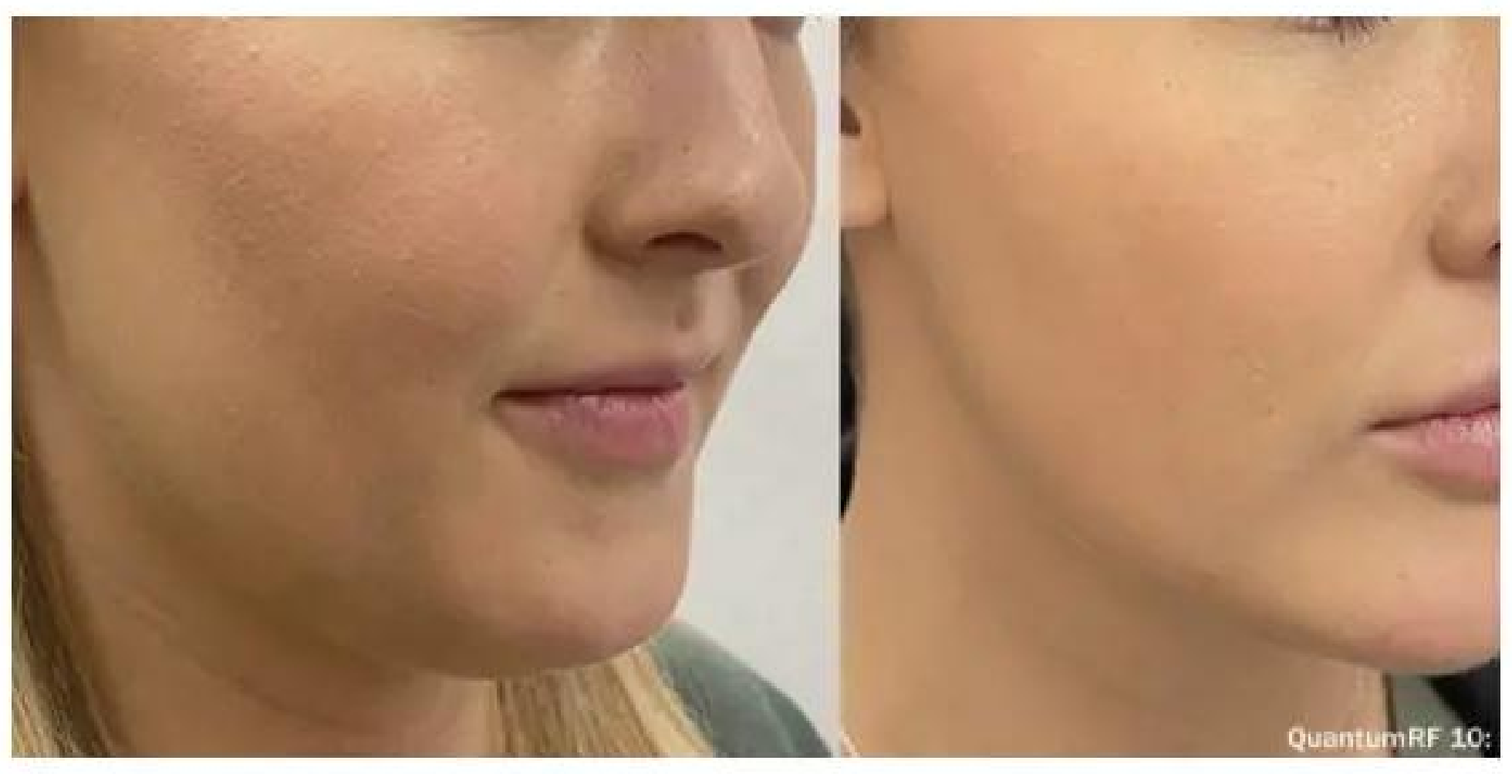

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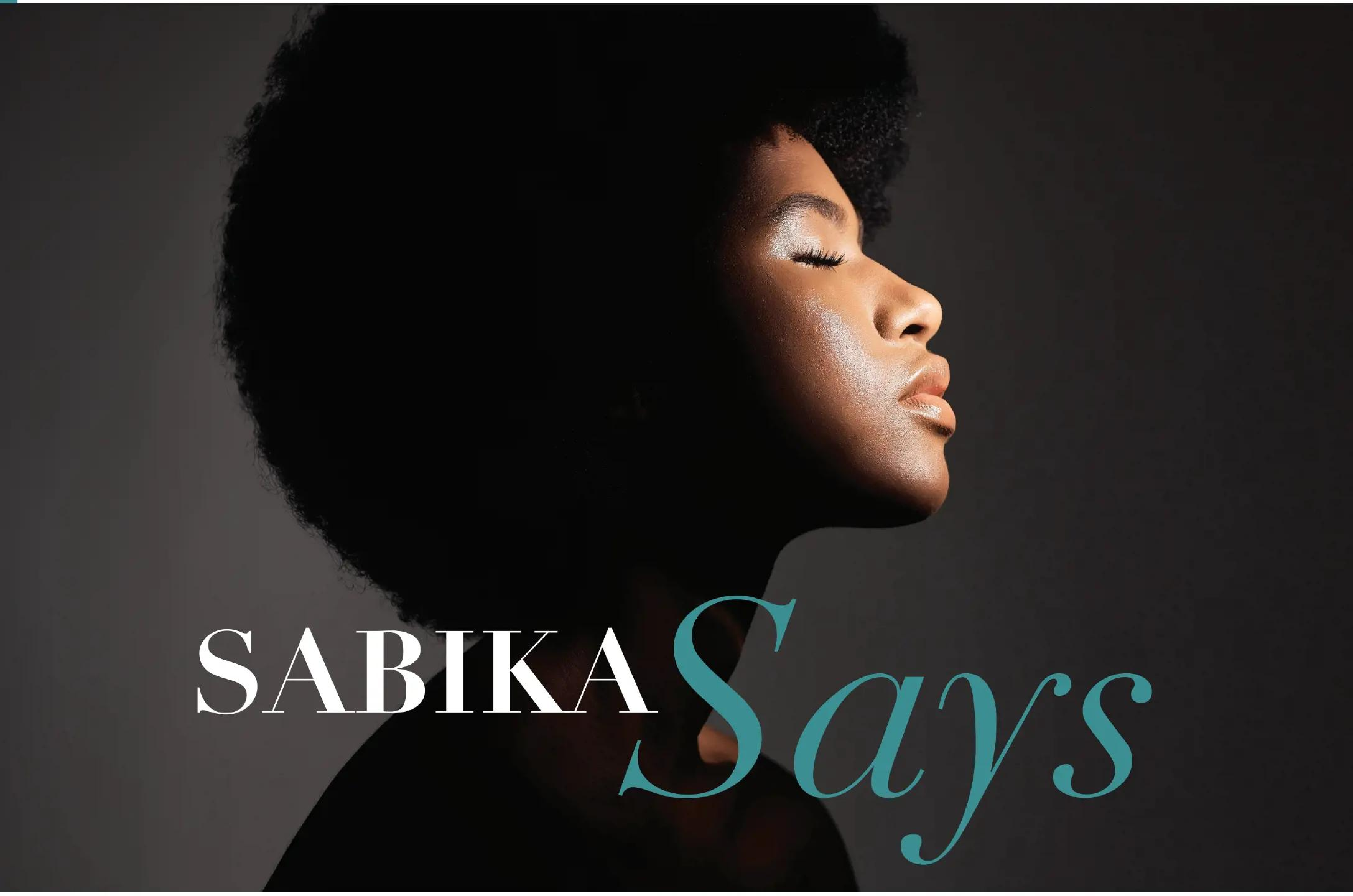


SABIKA *Says*

Columnist **Sabika Karim** gives her guide to treating skin of colour

In this month's edition of Sabika Says, I'm focusing on the unique needs of treating darker skin tones, specifically Fitzpatrick skin types IV-VI, in the context of medical aesthetics. The growing trend of proactive ageing is not just about restoring lost volume but about prioritising healthy, youthful skin. While this shift can be attributed to years of patient education, social media, and advancements in aesthetic treatments, it's essential to recognise the specific concerns and considerations that arise when working with darker skin tones.

CHALLENGES WITH SKIN OF COLOUR

Darker skin types are inherently more prone to post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation (PIH) due to distinct structural and functional differences. PIH occurs when inflammation triggers the skin's melanocytes to produce excess melanin, leading to persistent dark spots. In darker skin, the melanocytes and melanosomes are larger and more active, leading to a heightened response to inflammation. The dermal-epidermal junction (DEJ), which plays a crucial role in skin integrity, can be disrupted by inflammation, causing further melanocyte activity and melanin transfer to keratinocytes. As a result, hyperpigmentation becomes more severe.

Additionally, darker skin types face a heightened risk of keloid formation after skin injury or inflammation, which leads to raised, thickened scars. This makes it critical to adopt tailored treatment approaches to prevent adverse effects. Therefore, when treating darker skin, it is vital to manage inflammation effectively, reduce the risk of hyperpigmentation, and ensure treatments are safe and effective for the unique characteristics of these skin types.

KEY TIPS FOR TREATING SKIN OF COLOUR

Here are my top tips for successfully treating skin of colour, especially Fitzpatrick skin types IV-VI, using both preventative and treatment measures:

1. **Photoprotection:** Proper sun protection is essential when treating darker skin, especially for those with hyperpigmentation concerns. Always recommend SPF 50 or higher for the face, neck, and back of the hands. I recommend sunscreens with both physical and chemical blocks. Physical sunscreens provide immediate protection and are less likely to irritate the skin, while chemical filters can fill in any protection gaps. One favourite product is ***SmartSkincare NEOVA SPF 50***, which combines physical and chemical filters with antioxidants and DNA repair enzymes.

2. **Antioxidants:** Antioxidants play a crucial role in minimising hyperpigmentation by neutralising reactive oxygen species (ROS). ROS, produced by UV and visible light exposure, trigger melanocyte activation and melanin production. Antioxidants reduce oxidative stress and inhibit melanocyte stimulation. vitamin C is a powerful antioxidant, and ***C E Ferulic by Skinceuticals*** is a top recommendation for this. The serum combines vitamin C with vitamin E and ferulic acid to enhance the stability and effectiveness of both vitamins.
3. **Melanogenic pathway inhibitors:** Tyrosinase is the enzyme responsible for melanin production. By inhibiting tyrosinase, we can reduce melanocyte activity. The gold standard for inhibiting this enzyme is hydroquinone, which is available by prescription in the UK. For over-the-counter options, alpha-arbutin and kojic acid are great alternatives, although they are less potent. Tranexamic acid is also a strong depigmenting agent that works by reducing inflammation and inhibiting melanocyte-stimulating factors. ***Obagi C-Rx C-Clarifying Serum*** is one of my go-to products and contains hydroquinone and vitamin C, and ***Mesoestetic Melan Tran3x Concentrate*** combines tranexamic acid with niacinamide, another anti-inflammatory agent. They are great used in combination.
4. **Pre-treatment preparation:** Prior to undertaking skin rejuvenation treatments such as microneedling, RF microneedling, lasers, or chemical peels (all of which can cause inflammation), it's essential to prepare the skin to reduce the risk of PIH. In my experience, the ***Obagi Nu-Derm System*** is an excellent pre-treatment protocol for darker skin types. This comprehensive skincare system helps control patient outcomes and improve skin quality by incorporating exfoliators, tyrosinase inhibitors, moisturisers, and sunscreens, preparing the skin for more advanced treatments.
5. **Pigmentation and anti-inflammatory treatments:** In-clinic treatments can complement at-home skincare and are designed to address pigmentation and inflammation. ***Chemical peels, like the Mesoestetic Mesopeel MD melanostop tranex***, contain ingredients such as salicylic acid, kojic acid, and tranexamic acid, which target pigmentation while also reducing inflammation.

   Phototherapy with LED light is another excellent non-invasive treatment. The ***Dermalux Tri-wave MD*** utilises a combination of wavelengths to treat pigmentation with red light (633nm) and inflammation with near-infrared light (830nm). I use this as a standalone treatment or in conjunction with other treatments like RF microneedling or peels to reduce post-treatment inflammation and hyperpigmentation.

   Picosecond lasers, like the ***Candela Picoway***, effectively treat pigmentation by delivering energy in picoseconds (less than a millionth of a second). Unlike traditional lasers, which use heat to target pigmentation, picosecond lasers work on a photoacoustic basis, shattering pigmentation with sound energy for instant results. To prevent rebound pigmentation, patients should continue maintenance therapy with tyrosinase inhibitors.
6. **Skin resurfacing:** For skin resurfacing and collagen stimulation, radiofrequency microneedling (RFMN) is my preferred option for darker skin types. RF energy is "colour-blind", meaning it doesn't target pigment and can be safely used across all skin types when appropriately controlled. Devices like ***Cutera Secret RF*** offer precise depth control, and the use of insulated needle tips ensures energy is focused on the dermis, preventing heat from damaging the epidermis and reducing the risk of PIH. This minimises heat exposure to melanin-rich epidermis, making it safer for individuals with darker skin tones.
7. **Dark circle treatment:** Dark circles are more pronounced in darker skin types due to increased melanin production, genetic predisposition, and external factors such as inflammation. One of the most effective treatments for periorbital pigmentation is the use of polynucleotides (PNs), such as ***Croma PhilArt Eye***. These are formulated with lower concentrations to prevent excessive swelling and downtime. Polynucleotides help reduce inflammation and stimulate collagen production in the delicate eye area, offering an improvement in dark circle pigmentation.

CONCLUSION

Treating darker skin tones requires a customised approach, considering their unique structural and functional characteristics. These skin types are more prone to PIH and keloid formation, which necessitate careful pre-treatment preparation and post-treatment care. By focusing on photoprotection, antioxidant use, melanogenic pathway inhibitors, and specific in-clinic treatments like RF microneedling, chemical peels, and phototherapy, we can ensure optimal results without triggering pigmentation concerns.

Through my years of experience, these methods have proven successful in treating darker skin types and achieving beautiful, even toned, and healthy skin. Every skin type is unique, and with the right approach, we can address the aesthetic needs of all skin tones with care and precision.

DR SABIKA KARIM

Dr Sabika Karim, founder of Skin Medical, is a multi-award-winning international educator who combines her NHS GP background with 19 years of aesthetic medical practice to deliver gold standard treatments to her patients at the clinic whilst raising industry standards by teaching and training her peers.

Conflict of Interest Statement – The views expressed are solely my own and have not been influenced or sponsored by any external parties. For full transparency, I am a key opinion leader (KOL) for Sinclair Pharma, Cellese, Evolus, Dermalux, and Erchonia.

TREATING HYPERPIGMENTATION WITH LASERS

Dr Hiba Injibar recounts a two-pronged laser treatment for skin damage

DR HIBA INJIBAR
Dermasurge Clinic, based in the vibrant hub of Harley Street, stands out as a distinguished dermatology practice, founded and led by the esteemed international consultant dermatologist, Dr Hiba Injibar. With over 24 years of extensive experience in dermatology, honed through dedicated practice in the Middle East, Dr Injibar brings a wealth of expertise to London's prestigious private medical district, specialising in medical dermatology, cosmetic dermatology, and advanced laser treatments. Driven by a vision to offer comprehensive dermatological solutions all under one roof, Dr Injibar's goal at Dermasurge was to create a 'one-stop-shop' for all dermatology needs. Using cutting-edge technologies from around the globe, the clinic addresses a wide spectrum of skin concerns, ranging from cosmetic surgery needs like ageing and acne to complex conditions such as moles, scarring, vein problems, and skin cancer.

A 51-year-old female patient came to clinic with a primary concern of sun-induced hyperpigmentation, specifically sun spots, as well as fine lines and an uneven skin texture. She sought treatment to rejuvenate her skin, aiming for a clearer, smoother, and more youthful complexion. Her medical history had no contraindications for laser therapy. The patient's lifestyle included significant sun exposure in her earlier years, contributing to her current skin condition.

INITIAL ASSESSMENT

Upon clinical examination, sun spots were observed predominantly on the cheeks, forehead, and upper lip. Fine lines were most noticeable around the periocular and perioral areas, while the overall skin texture appeared slightly rough and lacked uniformity. A comprehensive evaluation determined that targeted laser treatments would be the most effective approach for addressing the patient's concerns.

TREATMENT APPROACH

The patient underwent a two-pronged laser treatment strategy designed to address both hyperpigmentation and skin texture irregularities:

1. DEKA Q-SWITCH LASER TREATMENT

Objective: The Q-switch laser was chosen for its precision when targeting and breaking down melanin deposits responsible for the sunspots. This type of laser emits high-intensity pulses that fragment pigmented lesions without damaging surrounding skin tissue.

Procedure details: The Q-switch laser was used for one session for 10-15 minutes at a wavelength of 532 nanometres. It was used, ahead of the CO_2 laser, to address the patient's sun spots specifically. This laser zaps the sunspots in one session, as well as treating generalised pigmentation.

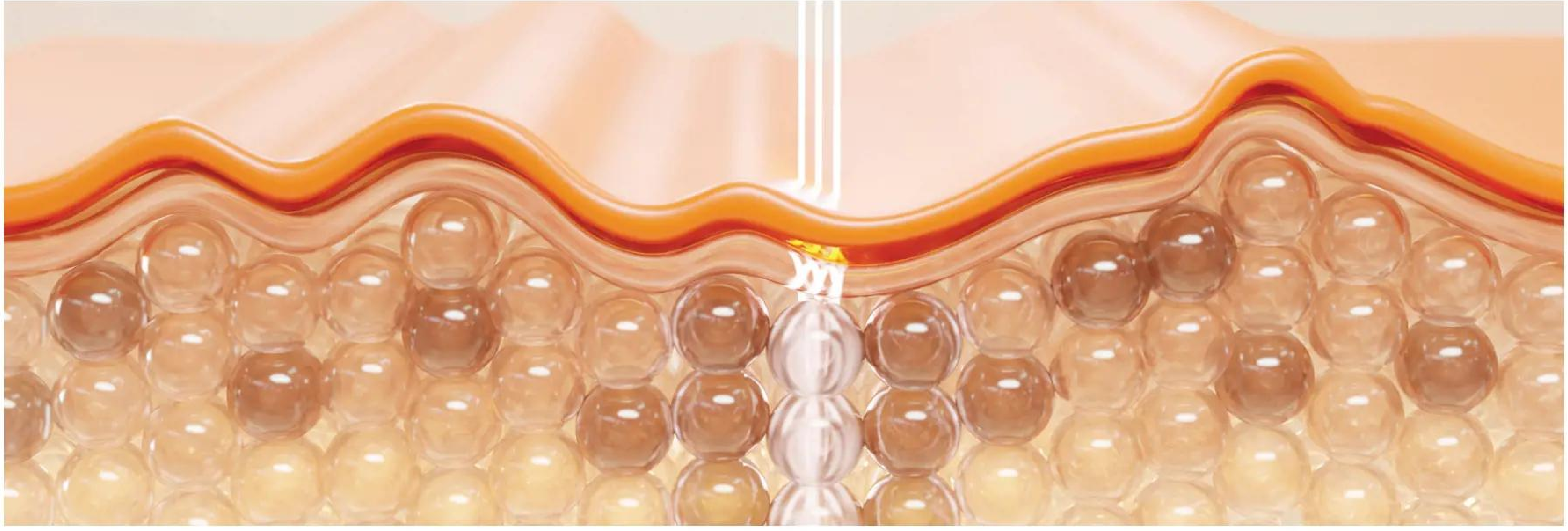
Post-procedure care: The patient was advised to avoid direct sun exposure and use a broad-spectrum sunscreen. Mild redness was anticipated and managed with a soothing topical cream.

2. FULL-FACE CO2 FRACTIONAL LASER TREATMENT

Objective: The fractional CO_2 laser was selected to improve skin texture and reduce the appearance of fine lines by promoting collagen production and skin resurfacing. Fractional technology allows for micro-injuries that trigger the skin's natural healing process, enhancing tissue regeneration.

Procedure details: Following the Q-switch laser treatment, Dr Injibar used the CO_2 laser across the whole face to resurface the skin, address pigmentation and improve the skin's texture and tone. This treatment takes approximately 35 minutes which also allows for numbing.

Post-procedure care: Post-treatment, redness typically lasts five to seven days.



By day two, the skin develops a tan-like appearance and yellowish crust that should be wiped with a vinegar solution twice daily. Skin flaking begins around five to seven days on the face and neck. Some swelling and a sunburn feeling may occur for three to four days but are normal unless accompanied by pain or fever. Post-care instructions include staying out of direct sunlight and using a vinegar solution for cleansing. A prescribed topical antibiotic was also applied for four days and Aquaphor or Vaseline was used frequently for hydration. The patient was recommended to avoid scrubbing the treated area, use SPF 30+ sunscreen and avoid picking scabs as well as refraining from heat exposure and vigorous exercise while staying hydrated and sleeping with an elevated pillow on the first day to reduce swelling.

RESULTS AND OBSERVATIONS

Sunspots: The DEKA Q-switch laser treatment proved highly effective in resolving hyperpigmentation. By day five post-treatment, a marked lightening of sunspots was visible. By the final post-treatment assessment, the sunspots had completely faded, leaving a uniform skin tone.

Fine lines and skin texture: The CO_2 fractional laser treatment demonstrated significant improvements in skin smoothness and the reduction of fine lines. By day six post-treatment, the skin appeared fresher, with visible enhancement in texture and reduced fine lines around the eyes and mouth. At the final post-treatment evaluation, the patient's skin showed a substantial increase in smoothness, firmness, and overall radiance.

PATIENT COMMENT

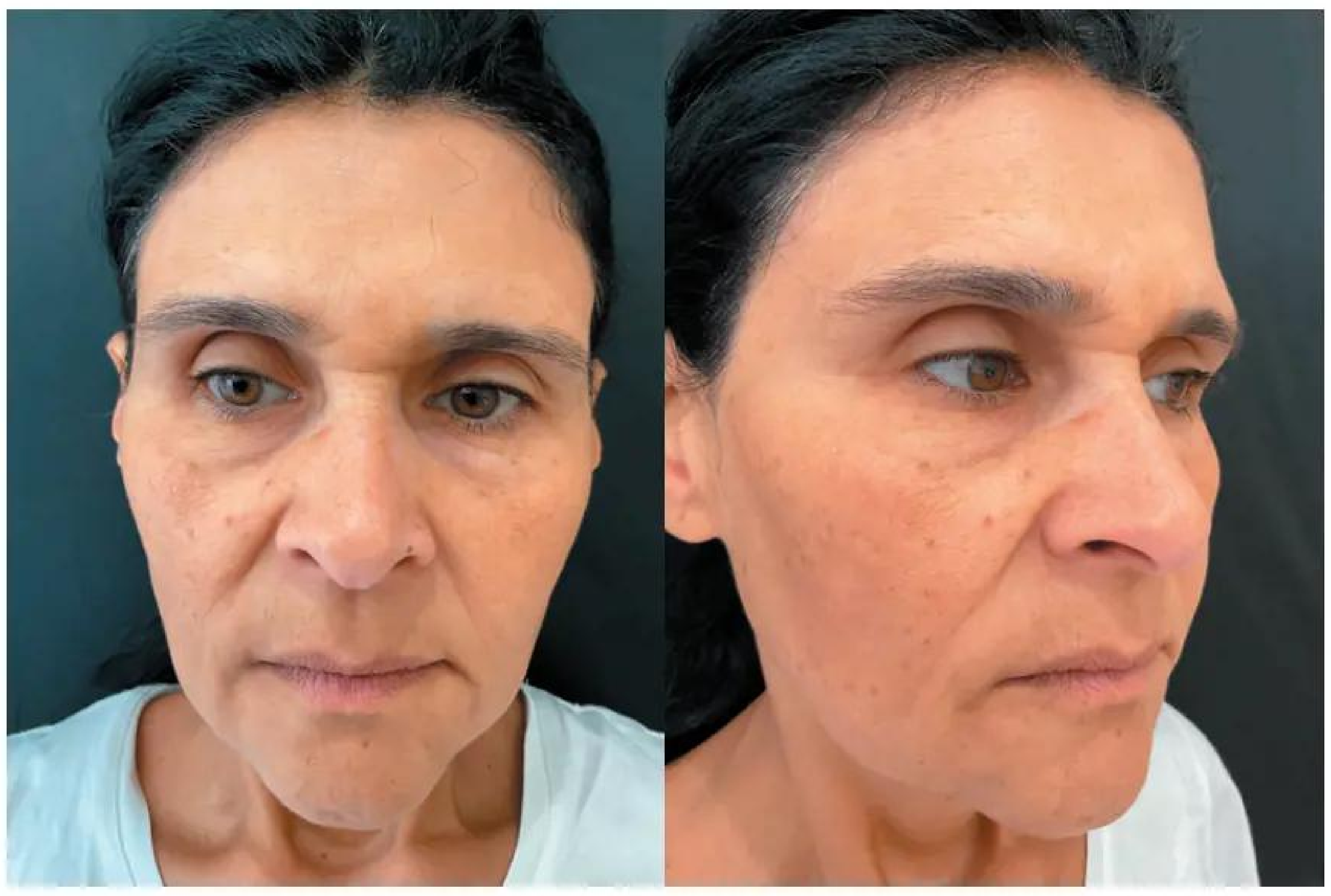
"After summer, I have lots of pigmentation and uneven skin tone due to being in the sun. I am looking forward to having my laser treatment at Dermasurge and restoring a more flawless complexion. I have had multiple treatments with Dr Injibar over the years and they have always been amazing. She makes me feel very comfortable."

CONCLUSION

The combined use of DEKA Q-switch and CO_2 fractional lasers provided a comprehensive treatment approach, effectively targeting both pigmentation and textural concerns. The non-ablative nature of the DEKA Q-switch ensured the safe and efficient removal of hyperpigmentation, while the fractional CO_2 laser stimulated deep skin rejuvenation.

The dual-modality approach underscores the importance of tailoring treatment plans to address multiple skin concerns in ageing patients. By targeting different skin layers — the epidermis for pigmentation and the dermis for texture and fine lines — optimal outcomes were achieved. At Dermasurge Clinic, combined treatments are often recommended to achieve the patient's desired outcome.

The case demonstrates that combining DEKA Q-switch laser treatment with full-face CO_2 fractional laser therapy is effective for managing sun-induced skin damage and signs of ageing. The patient experienced full resolution of sunspots and significant improvement in skin texture and fine lines, highlighting the efficacy of this treatment plan for similar dermatological presentations. AM



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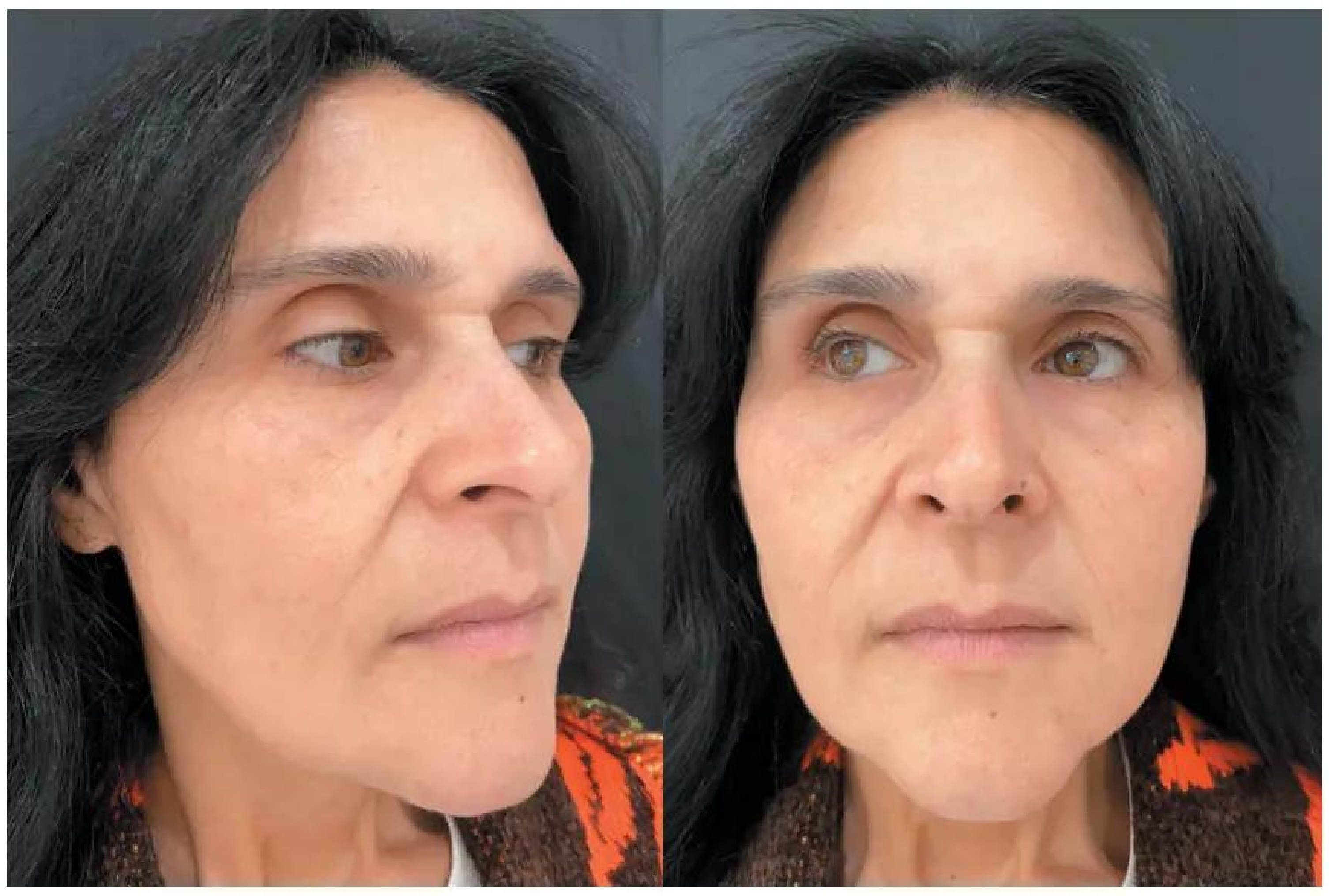

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The Princess and the PRP

Regenerative expert, nurse **Claudia McGloin** answers all your burning questions

CLAUDIA MCGLOIN

Claudia McGloin is a registered nurse and holds dual registration in both the UK and Ireland. With over 27 years' nursing experience, McGloin is the clinical director and nurse practitioner at The New You Clinic in Sligo. She is one of Ireland's leading platelet-rich plasma experts and has performed thousands of PRP treatments. She has shared her expertise on the international stage and in various publications.

"IS ALL PLATELET-RICH PLASMA (PRP) THE SAME?"

Platelet-rich plasma (PRP) therapy has become an increasingly popular treatment modality in regenerative and aesthetic medicine. By harnessing the body's natural healing abilities, PRP is used for various applications, from rejuvenating the skin and stimulating hair growth to accelerating wound healing and improving joint function. The concept is simple: PRP involves extracting a small sample of the patient's blood, concentrating the platelets, and reinjecting them into the desired area to promote healing and tissue regeneration. However, despite the apparent simplicity of this procedure, significant variations exist in how PRP is prepared and processed, and these differences have a profound impact on treatment outcomes.

Understanding the critical variables involved in PRP preparation including the choice of kits, the centrifugation protocols, and the handling of the blood sample can help ensure that the treatment is as effective as possible. While PRP offers promising results, it's essential to recognise that not all PRP is the same.

At its core, PRP is a concentrated solution of platelets, the blood components responsible for clotting and initiating the body's healing process. Platelets are rich in growth factors and proteins that can accelerate tissue repair, stimulate collagen production, and promote the regeneration of damaged tissue. The preparation of PRP begins with a blood draw, followed by centrifugation a process that separates the blood into its components based on their density. The platelets, along with a small amount of plasma, are then isolated and concentrated into a solution that can be reinjected into the treatment area.

While the underlying concept of PRP preparation is straightforward, the methods used to process and concentrate the platelets can vary widely, and these differences have a direct impact on the quality and effectiveness of the treatment.Notably, the choice of PRP kit, the centrifugation settings, and the compatibility of these elements can significantly affect the concentration of platelets, the presence of leukocytes, and the overall growth factor composition of the final PRP product.

One of the most important factors influencing the quality of PRP is the kit used to process the blood. Different PRP kits have varying tubes for separating platelets from other blood components. These kits are often designed to create a distinct separation between the blood layers, allowing for the isolation of a PRP layer. However, the effectiveness of this separation process can depend on several factors, including the kit's design, the material used for the collection tubes, and the processing protocol.

The choice of kit is crucial because it directly affects the concentration of platelets, white blood cells, and other plasma components in the final PRP product. Some kits also include additives or special coatings designed to enhance the efficacy of platelet activation or improve the quality of platelet separation. Using a kit that is not designed for re-injection or isincompatible with the practitioner's intended treatment protocol can lead to suboptimal results and potential complications.

Unfortunately, some practitioners may attempt to cut costs by using unlicensed or subpar kits, which can lead to inconsistent results and complications. For this reason, it is essential to choose high-quality, clinically-approved PRP kits that have been specifically designed for the intended purpose.

Centrifugation plays a vital role in PRP preparation by separating the blood into its components. During the centrifugation process, the blood is spun at high speeds, causing the denser components (such as red blood cells) to move to the bottom of the collection tube, while the lighter components (including platelets and plasma) remain at the top. The speed, duration, and temperature of the centrifugation process can all influence how effectively the platelets are concentrated and separated from other blood cells.

In general, centrifuge speed is measured in revolutions per minute (RPM), and the time for which the blood is spun can range from five to 15 minutes. Faster spins or longer centrifugation times typically result in higher platelet concentrations, but they can also cause platelet activation or damage, leading to reduced efficacy. Likewise, the type of centrifuge used whether a fixed-angle or swinging-bucket centrifuge can affect the efficiency of the separation process and the yield of PRP.

Another critical factor to consider is the compatibility between the PRP kit and the centrifuge. Not all centrifuge systems are suitable for every PRP kit, and using incompatible equipment can result in inefficient separation or suboptimal platelet yields. This is why it's essential to follow manufacturer recommendations and use both compatible kits and centrifuge systems to achieve the best results.

The platelet concentration can be influenced by several factors, including the PRP kit used, the centrifugation protocol, and the presence of white blood cells. Some protocols emphasise platelet activation by adding calcium chloride or thrombin before injection while others opt for a more controlled, slower activation process. Both the concentration and activation state of the platelets can affect the potency of the growth factors released during the PRP procedure, and these variations can lead to different treatment outcomes.

There is currently no universal standard for how PRP should be prepared or applied. In some countries, PRP therapy can only be performed by licensed physicians, which can help ensure that the procedure is done safely and effectively. However, in many cases, lack of regulation and standardisation can lead to inconsistent results, increasing the risk of suboptimal outcomes or complications.

While PRP is an amazing regenerative aesthetic treatment, its success relies on understanding and managing the many variables involved in the preparation process. The choice of PRP kit, centrifuge settings, and blood handling protocols all contribute to the final quality and efficacy of the treatment. To achieve consistent, high-quality results, practitioners need to use clinically approved PRP kits, compatible centrifuge systems, and well-established protocols. By recognising why all PRP is not the same and optimising these variables, medical professionals can help ensure the best possible outcomes for their patients, advancing the field of regenerative medicine in the process.

If you have questions regarding any aspect of regenerative medicine – PRP, PPP, PRF, polynucleotides, exosomes – or questions relating to treatments, please get in touch, either by contacting *Aesthetic Medicine* magazine or emailing claudia@thenewyouclinic.ie. AM

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BEST *Practice*

How to make patients aware that you are a safe, qualified practitioner

DR AAMER KHAN

Dr Aamer Khan, a medical doctor who has practised for nearly 30 years, graduated from the highly respected University of Birmingham in 1986, having studied a variety of specialities including Human Psychology, Psychiatry, Surgery and Dermatology. Dr Khan continues to make bounds in the arena of cosmetic treatment, recently being recognised by the British Armed Forces for his reconstructive finesse.

Currently, practitioners offering aesthetic treatments like toxins, fillers, and many other treatments in the UK aren't legally required to have any qualifications or training,[1] sparking an alarming rise in unsafe procedures.

With 11% of the UK population having an aesthetic treatment in the last year alone,[2] it is important for patients to know what they should be considering when choosing a practitioner to ensure they can receive safe and quality treatment.

Many people are surprised to discover the limited regulations required for some cosmetic procedures in the UK. The fact that products like toxin and filler can be administered by anyone regardless of qualification is undoubtedly worrying.

Many people are unaware of the harm that can be caused if procedures like this are done incorrectly. Those carrying out aesthetic work should understand the anatomy of the face, the impact different products will have and the possible side effects.

While regulation remains loose, those looking to undergo cosmetic work should educate themselves of the signs of a good practitioner to ensure they're in safe hands.

PRACTITIONER RED FLAGS

No credentials, formal training or not qualified: First and foremost for a safe and desired result, the practitioner must hold relevant qualifications. As a qualified medic, you will have an understanding of your patients' anatomy, the products being used and the importance of hygiene, as well as having undergone appropriate training.

Very low prices: While super-low prices can be tempting to patients, especially during current economic conditions, these can often be a warning sign. Low prices can signal inadequate or even fake products. High-quality filler and other cosmetic products need lots of investment to ensure the product is safe and of a high standard which drives up the product price. Low procedure prices could be a reflection of poor products.

The ability to offer such low prices could signal that the practitioner has cut corners when it comes to training, hygiene or safety to offer such cheap services, so know your worth.

Pressurised sales technique: Any trusted and reputable practitioner will want to ensure that the patient is happy with the procedures they intend to purchase. They will be cautious to ensure the patient understands the product, the procedure and how it will affect their appearance. Pressurised selling is a sign that the practitioner in question doesn't care for their patient or the outcome of the work they do. Don't push patients to invest in treatments before they are comfortable.

No consultation, consent forms or formal documentation: In order to ensure they have the patients' absolute consent, understand their needs and that they are aware of any side effects, a good practitioner will always undertake a thorough consultation and ensure the patient fills out various forms of documentation. Ask patients to register their details, their medical history, any medications, skincare usage, and lastly ask them to sign a consent waiver. If a practitioner doesn't ask for any of these, rushes patients to commit to a procedure with little knowledge, and doesn't question their health background, this is a huge red flag. A practitioner should also offer follow-up appointments to review the procedure and be easily contactable should the patient need anything further.

Say yes to everything: An expert practitioner will always offer their expertise and input when discussing potential procedures. They may suggest alternatives, ask follow-up questions or even flat out refuse to do a procedure. This is a sign that they care about the outcome of their work, the patients' satisfaction and most importantly patient safety. Patients should be aware that, if a practitioner will happily administer any procedure without question, this can be a sign they aren't the best choice.

Unable to answer questions: A practitioner should have plenty of knowledge of the procedures they are offering. They should be able to confidently answer any questions and be happy to discuss any concerns the patient may have.

The patient should feel confident in the procedure they wish to undertake and confident in the abilities of the practitioner who will be administering it.

Unorganised, dirty space: A clean, organised and tidy space is a sign of a trusted practitioner. The space in which patients receive their treatment must be hygienic in order to preserve safety, so this is a vital sign. As a practitioner, you should wear appropriate protective clothing, including gloves, and pay attention to personal hygiene. When it comes to the space, keep surfaces clean and tidy, dispose of rubbish correctly and have disposable coverings on furniture.

No reviews, edited imagery and lack of case studies: A reputable practitioner will have plenty of reviews and case studies of previous patients where you can see examples of their work and read the experiences of others. One key thing patients should look out for are unedited images; those who are doing quality aesthetic work shouldn't feel the need to edit imagery or videos to promote themselves.

As long as patients educate themselves on the differences between a good and bad practitioner, they should be able to undergo any procedures with confidence. The main thing to consider above all should be qualifications and training. Sadly this isn't a requirement under law currently, but pressure is mounting on the government to make changes to this.

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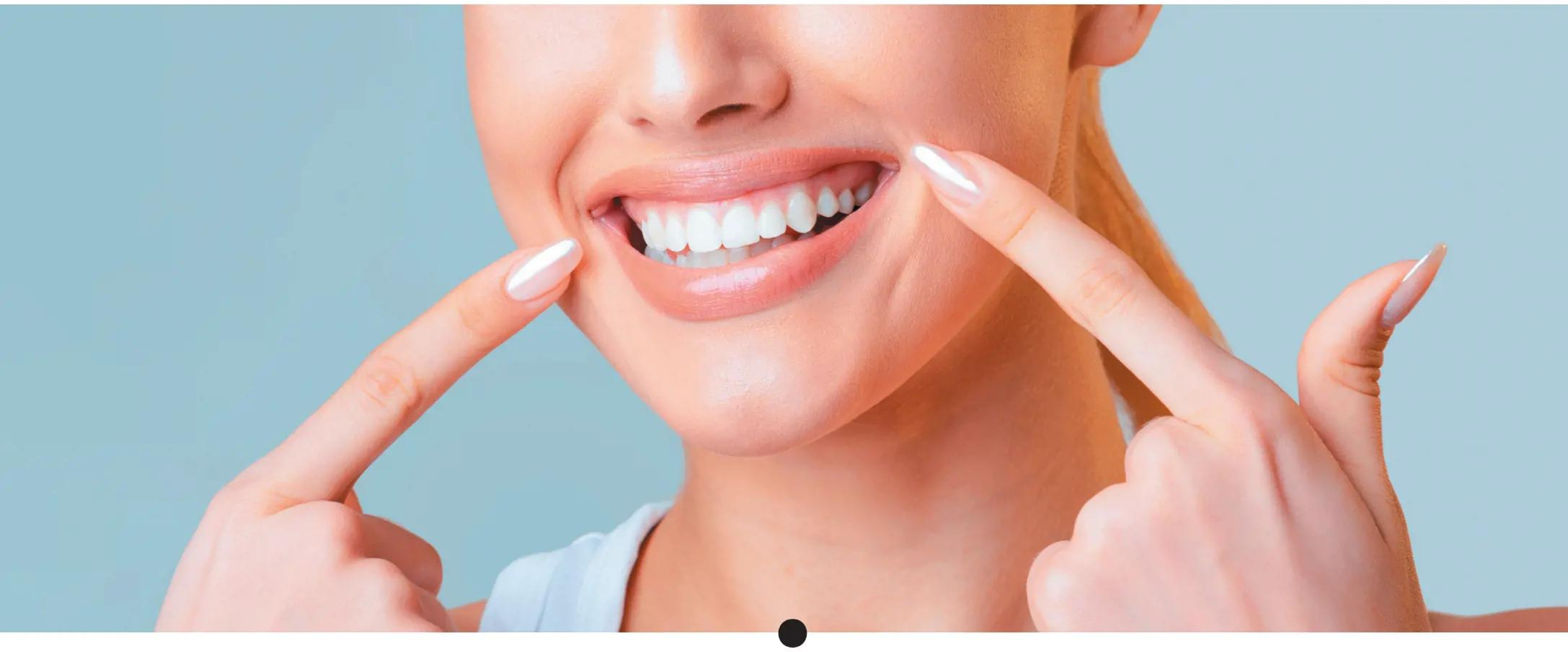

MAKING THE *jump*

Dr Raquel Amado recounts her experiences transitioning to aesthetics from dentistry

DR RAQUEL AMADO
Dr Raquel Amado, founder of Dr Raquel Skin and Medical Cosmetics, is a renowned Level 7 aesthetic practitioner, senior clinical trainer, key opinion leader, and international speaker. A 2007 Dentistry graduate from Portugal, she specialises in regenerative aesthetics and holistic wellness, focusing on full-face rejuvenation with long-lasting, natural results.

Dentists are in the perfect position to venture into the world of aesthetics. I'm not the first practitioner to make this connection, and I certainly won't be the last. My opinion differs slightly, however, in that becoming a specialist in aesthetics requires you to dedicate yourself to it completely – it can't just be done "on the side" of dentistry if you want to excel.

A few years ago, I took this leap myself and while the road has been rocky at times, I haven't looked back since.

Most dentists begin their careers with the dream of helping their patients love their smiles and grow in self-confidence. But for many new dentists, that's not the reality; they aren't really prepared for what the day-to-day of dentistry will be like. After a while, that initial dream seems increasingly unattainable, and frustration sets in; they aren't fulfilled by their careers. If anything, it's the complete opposite – many dentists hit burnout, and dread going into work only to be met with unhappy, anxious patients, compounded by immense amounts of stress and the constant feeling of being overworked.

In fact, studies have linked dental professionals with high rates of depression and even suicide – something not readily discussed within the industry or even among the public at large.

When I came to the realisation that I didn't find my dentistry career fulfilling, I knew I needed to get out. It was around the same time that I discovered aesthetics, and from speaking with colleagues and from my subsequent time as a trainer, I found out that I was not alone; many dentists begin to search for a new venture when they reach this breaking point. Aesthetics seems like a natural next step, as the two specialities appear to go together.

Now that I am an established aesthetics practitioner and have been a Level 7 senior clinical trainer for over five years, I meet so many dentists who are looking to break into aesthetics but aren't sure how. The best advice I can give is: if you want to be successful in aesthetics and make a career for yourself in the sector, you ideally need to think about retiring from dentistry and making the change full-time. You must go all in.

GETTING PAST THE STIGMA

One of the main roadblocks to moving into aesthetics is the stigma associated with dentistry.

There is a historical association between dentistry and pain or an unpleasant clinical experience. Although cosmetic dentistry is more popular than ever, many people associate dentists with painful medical procedures – fillings, tooth removal, even wire braces from when they were teenagers! Retiring from dentistry and moving into aesthetics requires totally disassociating from this stigma.

Dentists are perfectly placed to become aestheticians, as they have an in-depth knowledge of the anatomy of the face. Dentists are used to working in confined spaces with syringes and instruments, and, of course, rebuilding smiles takes an artistic eye.

We are also experts in pain relief, and the delicate and dexterous process of injecting the mouth – one of the most sensitive parts of the body. You really couldn't ask for better expertise.

However, in my opinion, patients are much more likely to look to professions such as nursing for potential aestheticians, because of the negative associations they have with dentists. One of the major hurdles to developing a successful aesthetics clinic is to build a client base – which is a challenge without the obstacle of patients' negative associations of going to the dentist.

BUILDING YOUR OWN PRACTICE

As part of breaking the stigma, you need to physically distance yourself from your dental practice into a separate space for your aesthetics business. The waiting room in a dental practice is not the best environment for aesthetics patients to be in. They will be surrounded by a mix of patients in pain, those nervous about extractions or root canals – all in all, quite an oppressive atmosphere. Aesthetics patients need to be in a more positive setting, where they can be excited about their treatments and their "new look" – it's a completely different experience.

I know that setting up your own practice can seem intimidating – but from my experience, it's vital to success. Even if it's a single, small consultation room in your current dental practice to begin with, expanding into a new, dedicated space – without a dental chair and the smells and sounds associated with being at the dentist – means that treatments won't be linked to pain and the dreaded dental check-ups.

My own business didn't begin to take off until I completely severed my ties from dentistry; I was able to start my aesthetics practice with a clean slate and build a whole new brand. I began with a small consultation space and have since grown my clinic, but throughout I have promoted the same relaxed, luxurious environment for my patients. The consultation room shouldn't be too clinical, as patients need to feel comfortable and excited about their treatments – but it must still be a professional space that inspires confidence in your patients.

Of course, this means a significant investment in your new business – so you need to be prepared to take an initial financial hit, especially if you decide to go into aesthetics full-time. Don't jump into aesthetics without a plan and without being in a secure enough position financially to be able to make it work. It's a big commitment and you need to be ready for it.

You won't be fully booked from day one, so one option might be to register for locum work as a dentist or work part-time at an already-established aesthetics clinic. This will give you a secure stream of income for future expansion, as well as give you time to develop relationships with new patients and build your reputation.

If your experience has been working in a dental practice, you'll be stepping away from a "normal" job with a guaranteed salary, into a much more uncertain – but exciting – world. You're going from being an employee to becoming your own boss, potentially – so make sure you understand what this entails. You need to be self-disciplined, and you need to be prepared to put the time and effort in to make your clinic a success.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK AND SKILL UP

If you haven't done it before, setting up and running your own business requires a set of skills and knowledge that not everyone will have. Investing in a business coach will relieve the pressure of trying to figure things out on your own and will help you understand how to build a brand.

Being a skilled aesthetician is just the first part of the battle; you've got to be able to market yourself and grow your patient base, and that takes an investment in time and money. Don't overlook the business side of your new practice in the excitement of moving into a new industry.

Your experience in dentistry will set you up for aesthetics clinically speaking, giving you a good foundation for dealing with issues around patient care, consent and managing patient expectations. However, you will need to invest in expanding your expertise, as aesthetics – as with all medical sub-specialisations – is a constantly developing field. You need to seek out new skills and qualifications to increase your knowledge of evolving industry innovations and techniques.

It's a journey that never ends – you will continuously be learning new practices and industry standards, to offer the best level of care to your patients, and to attract new clients. It takes time and dedication, but furthering your knowledge pays off, leading to a client base that trusts you and returns repeatedly for treatments.

WORTH THE EFFORT: MY LIFE AS AN AESTHETICS PRACTITIONER

I won't lie – changing professions and moving into aesthetics has been a difficult experience at times, but it is well worth it. I now have a genuine enthusiasm for what I do and go home with a smile on my face.

My patients are always happy to see me and are excited about coming into my practice. I have built genuine, trusting relationships with them as they return time and time again to my clinic. Together we develop bespoke treatment journeys, really getting to the crux of their issues. It's so satisfying to see my patients become more confident in themselves.

I don't have the stress of having to operate a "defensive practice", with the constant worry of patient dissatisfaction or litigation – something I'm sure will resonate with many reading this.

I love my career, and it is so much more rewarding than I ever felt in my life as a dentist. It may seem daunting, but hopefully, by sharing some of my experience, you'll see that moving from dentistry to aesthetics is something well within your grasp – and well worth the effort.

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ENDING ON A *high*

As we approach the end of the tax year, members of our Women in Aesthetic Medicine group give their top tips on managing finances

As the end of the tax year approaches, it's a good time to reflect on your clinic's finances and investments. Dr Uliana Gout suggests taking a step back to review the past year and consider how to redistribute investments for the year ahead.

"It's always a nice idea to sit back and review the financial landscape of the last 12 months," she adds. "I would always recommend having a good accountant and financial advisor to bounce ideas and get some strategic guidance. Planning quarterly is also a nice way to budget carefully and to always consider how to best mitigate risk given the bigger financial economy landscape and also the trends in the aesthetic industry."

Nurse practitioner Tracey Denison emphasises that managing finances and investments requires foresight, adaptability, and constant review, much like caring for a patient: "I ensure every decision aligns with long-term goals, balancing security with growth, just as I would balance immediate care with future health outcomes. It's about being proactive, informed, and always prepared to adjust to change."

Dr Mayoni Gooneratne looks at the problem from a different angle. "I try to set my vision for my life and work backwards to work out what I need to be earning, saving and spending," she adds. "This allows me to create a monthly personal and business spending plan."

As the "guardian of the clinic finances", Dr Anna Hemming makes sure that stock is purchased, any large spends are made and pension top-ups are done when possible. "It's so important to look after the business finances and nurture them," she adds. "Look for patterns, monthly ups and downs, and note times when spending is higher or lower; this helps plan business progression and needs. By the end of the tax year, all your planning should come together, creating the best outcome for you and the business."

Dr Sabika Karim highlights the importance of managing finances for running a successful aesthetic clinic.

"Start by reviewing the last year's trends and identifying what may be ahead, the current financial landscape and any unmet patient needs," adds Dr Karim. "Then it's prudent to review the business's financial health and set clear goals aligned with the clinic's vision. It's important to prioritise reinvestment in staff training, new technology, and improving patient care.

"Maintain a flexible growth strategy to adapt to industry trends while avoiding overextension. Allocate funds for marketing, but ensure campaigns align with your clinic's ethical standards. Always plan for contingencies to manage unexpected expenses. Finally, consult a financial advisor to explore savings, investments, and pensions, balancing securing long-term stability with growth for your clinic. We are experts in aesthetic medicine, but they are the money experts." AM

WOMEN *in*

aesthetic
MEDICINE

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High-tech facials:

HIGH-TECH FACIALS

Contributing reporter **Kezia Parkins** visits Lisa Franklin Clinic to try the Caci Flex Facial

THE LOWDOWN

Marrying high-tech tools and holistic practices, the Caci Flex Facial combines microcurrent technologies, the power of LED light therapy and suped-up gua sha (a traditional Chinese medicine technique that involves scraping the skin with a tool to improve circulation, reduce inflammation, and promote relaxation), to contour and sculpt the face, promote lymphatic drainage, boost circulation and reduce puffiness and renew the skin for a radiant glowing complexion.

THE EXPERIENCE

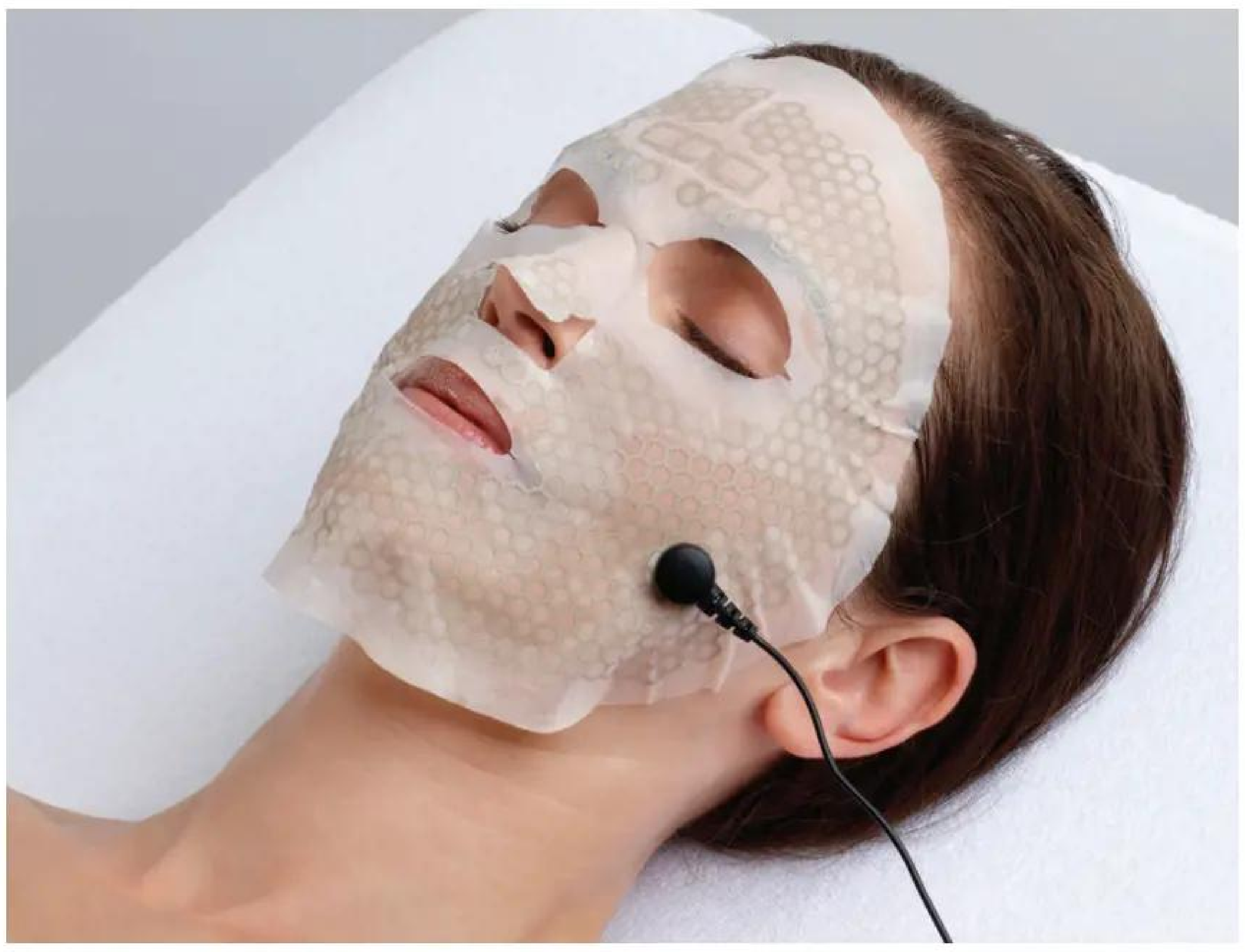
It was great to be back at one of my favourite clinics. Even on a hectic, stress-filled workday, Lisa Franklin's rose quartz haven is a respite from the fast pace of many of our daily lives.

After being given the space to slow down, get undressed and settle on the bed, the therapist gave me a thorough double cleanse, before reaching for Caci's iconic Quad Probes.

Despite their slightly intimidating appearances, the probes are a super non-invasive way to gently grab and target the tissue and muscles in the face to lift and firm muscles and redefine facial contours. The therapist used a pumping action on my cheek muscles and under my chin after more gentle contouring. Meanwhile, my skin is also reaping the benefits of the LED light.

The next step combined microcurrent and gua sha with the new treatment heads that are made with electroplated stainless steel. After a cooling, conducting gel was applied, the therapist started gently using the tools to drain any fluid from my face while infusing the microcurrent. This felt particularly amazing around my sinuses and eyes which always get congested and puffy.

The final step was the brand-new Microcurrent Energising Mask.



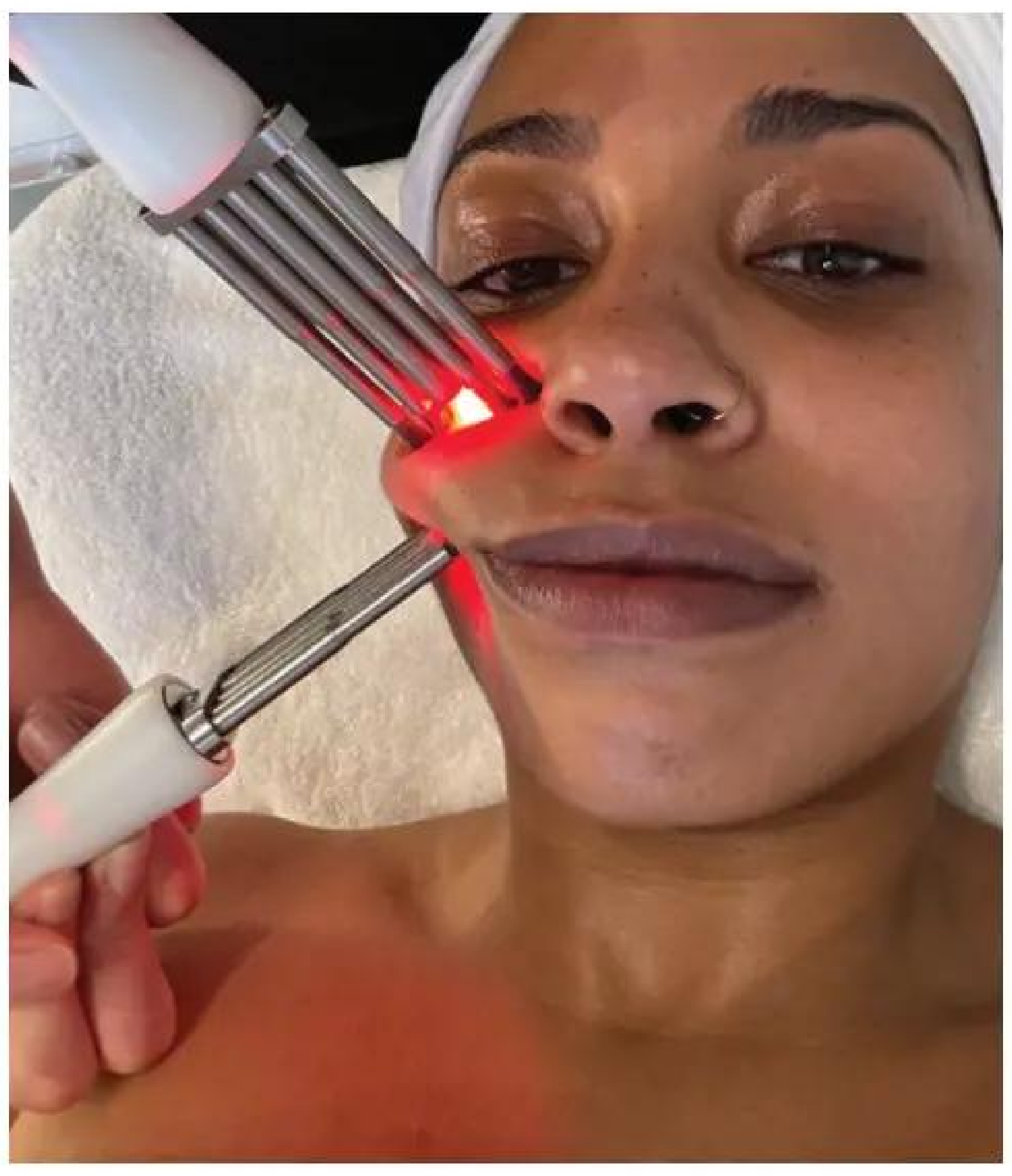
This fascinating sheet mask is printed with a silver conductive electronic circuit, activated by the Caci Synergy Flex system, allowing the whole face to be touched with the microcurrent energy.

The masks have replaced Caci's individual pads placed on the face or neck during a non-surgical facial toning treatment to transmit microcurrent and boosted with Super Charge Energiser sachets of highly concentrated electrolytes and minerals, that ionise and increase the electrical conductivity of water. Added vitamin C, marine collagen and niacinamide all help to smooth, hydrate and brighten the skin.

THE VERDICT

Despite being a treatment in which 10 to 15 sessions are recommended, I felt and saw benefits after one session. My skin was radiant and depuffed and my sinuses felt clearer, seeing me leave the clinic in a much better state of wellbeing than when I arrived.

I believe this was the perfect example of when high-tech meets holistic.



SYNERGY FLEX
caci

BUSINESS BENEFITS

Clients will love this facial, not only for the results, but also the Instagramability of the steps and how it helps relax the whole body. Also, the Synergy Flex system helps future-proof your business by always being updatable and customisable, with existing treatment heads and new ones yet to come to market.

Recommended price: From £120

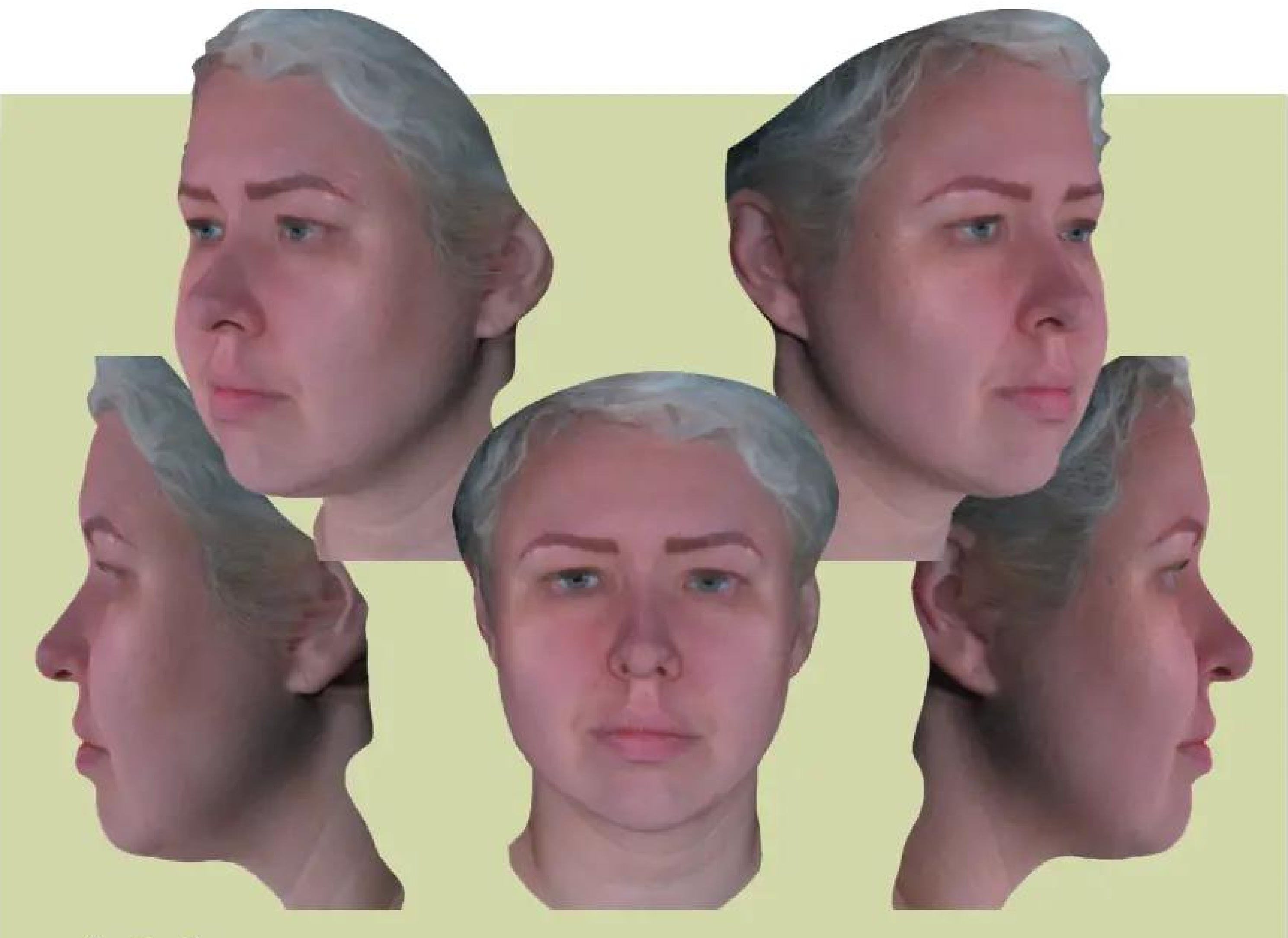
Treatment review:

FACIAL BALANCING WITH AURA

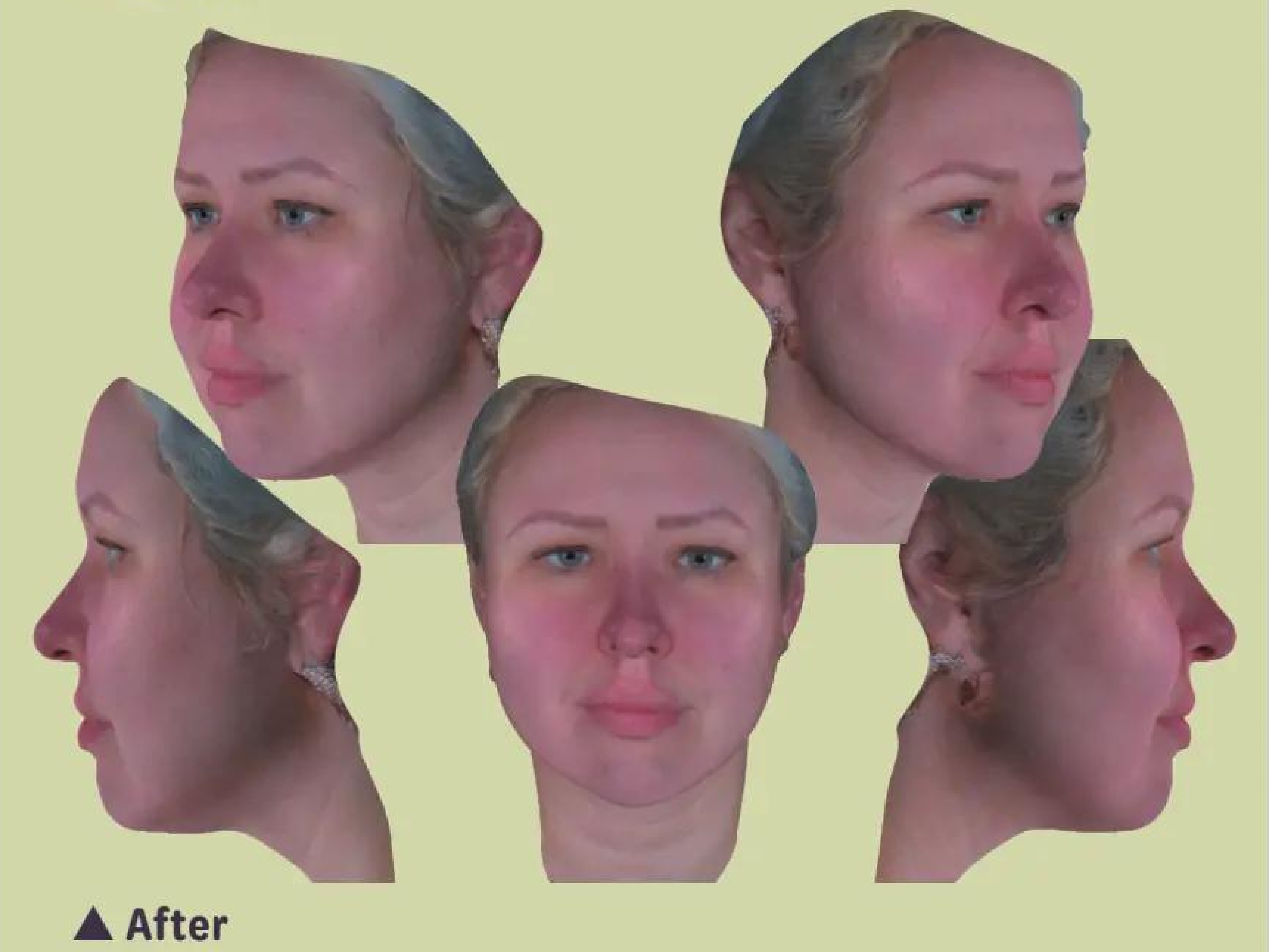
Editor **Anna Dobbie** visits **Dr Sophie Shotter** to try the new imaging system

THE LOWDOWN:

The Aura 3D Imaging System uses multiple cameras and lights to create an accurate 3D digital model of patients' faces and necks. Additionally, it provides real-time data of the skin, including skin analysis for pores, brown spots, red areas and texture, capturing different facial expressions, visualising measurements of angles and distances, and assessing volume differences and lifting effects after treatments.



▲ Before



▲ After

THE EXPERIENCE:

This was my first experience of being treated by Dr Sophie Shotter and I was very excited as I follow her work closely and am always impressed by her results. During my consultation, she utilised the Aura 3D Imaging System to conduct a thorough facial scan, providing a holistic view of my facial structure. Dr Shotter identified that my chin was slightly undersized, contributing to a perceived facial weakness and the appearance of a double chin. She recommended a small amount of filler to the lower face to enhance my facial contours, and I trust Dr Shotter's expertise. She also gave me a full list of products to prep my skin with, which were kindly sent to me by GetHarley, including Meder RedAax, Revision C+ Corrective Serum and Revision Intellishade SPF45. She used a cannula to insert half a ml Juvederm Voluma per side to my lateral zygoma and half a ml per side to my preauricular area, a total of one ml per side to create a back-pin and restore the lateral structure of my face. She then used half a ml Volux per side of my lower face with a needle for the angle of my jaw to create structure and again to help support my tissues backwards and back-pin. Finally, Dr Shotter also used half a ml per side with a cannula to my anterior jawline to give some strength to my anterior mandible, and add framework and support to improve the appearance of the double chin. The treatment was swift and minimally discomforting, with immediate results.

THE VERDICT:

Post-treatment, my chin was visibly more pronounced, decreasing the appearance of my double chin and significantly improving my overall facial symmetry in real life as well as on the Aura images. I am very happy with the outcome as it has improved my self-esteem without a massive amount of time or fuss. The transformative impact of this minor adjustment on my overall appearance is truly remarkable.

BUSINESS BENEFITS:

Apart from its technological prowess, offering a new level of detail in skin analysis and communication with the patients, the Aura 3D Imaging System stands out for its compact and sleek design. It is user-friendly, making it easy for any of your clinic staff to utilise, enhancing productivity, and focusing on patient consultations and treatment planning.

FOLLICLE FORMER

Sculpt Pro Aesthetics

The new Follicle Former from Sculpt Pro Aesthetics is designed to stimulate hair growth from follicles, improve scalp health, and support post-transplant healing, as well as promote natural hair growth. The low-level laser therapy device is suitable for all hair types, using LLLT to increase blood circulation to the scalp, with adjustable intensity settings for patient comfort.

CEBELIA
Nettoyant Doux Intime
Gentle Intimate Cleanser
COMFORT AND BALANCE
Made in France

Cebelia

Post-treatment skincare range Cebelia, distributed by 4T Medical, has launched an intimate range, including the professional Intimate Depigmenting Peel, and two home care products. The peel is formulated for external delicate regions and friction-prone areas (such as underarms, inner thighs, knees and elbows), to help even skin tone and reduce the appearance of pigmentation.

PRODUCT NEWS

OBAGI MEDICAL
NU-CIL
Eyelash Enhancing Serum
0.10 FL. OZ. (3mL)

Obagi

Obagi Medical's latest launch, the Nu-Cil Eyebrow Boosting Serum, addresses the appearance of thinning, patchy or over-tweezed brows. Designed with a formula of intelligent ingredients, the serum offers an improvement in the appearance of brow fill after eight weeks. Obagi's NouriPlex technology is a unique blend of biotin, sodium hyaluronate, panthenol and a proprietary lipid compound to fuse keratin together.

Pure Tone Aesthetics

Pure Tone Aesthetics has launched the Supramax Pelvic Floor Chair for aesthetic clinics and wellness practices looking to expand their treatment offerings. The chair utilises high intensity focused electromagnetic technology, generating electromagnetic pulses that stimulate pelvic floor muscles with precision and intensity. Each 28-minute session delivers the equivalent of 11,000 kegel exercises, providing a non-invasive muscle engagement and strengthening.

Skin. Body. Mind.
TEA & TONIC
MEADOW SECRET
ROSE COLLAGEN MATCHA
ADAPTOGEN SUPERHERB TEA

Tea and Tonic

Skincare and wellness brand Tea and Tonic has unveiled its newest launch, the Meadow Secret Rose Collagen Matcha. The tea combines adaptogenic super herbs with lion's mane mushrooms and is specifically crafted to support hormone balance during the various stages of a woman's life, including perimenopause and menopause. Key ingredients include marine collagen peptides sourced from wild-caught fish and ceremonial grade matcha to promote a sense of calm while boosting serotonin levels.

REM

The new Excel Pro4 from REM Aesthetic Medical Furniture is a fully adjustable chair featuring hand-held motorised controls, manual foot control pad and a removable neck cushion. A fully extendable footpad and upright to lay-flat positions are easily achieved with motorised operation and soft PU upholstery.

BTL

BTL Aesthetics has designed new periorbital applicators to address the delicate eye area, tackling visible signs of ageing like eye bags, dark circles and crow's feet. EMFace Periorbital specifically strengthens the lower part of the orbicularis oculi muscles using muscle stimulation, helping to "push back" the eye bags while promoting lymphatic drainage to prevent fluid stagnation, a contributing factor to their appearance. The device is entirely non-invasive, improving the appearance of the periorbital area without needles.

Iräye

IRÄYE
SWISS SCIENCE
EYE REVIVE CREAM

Swiss scientific skincare brand Iräye has released its Eye Revive Cream, aimed at boosting lymphatic activity. The multi-action formula brightens, and tightens the eye area, reducing puffiness and fine lines. Key ingredients include bio-retinol, caffeine, and kakadu plum extract, for visibly refreshed eyes.

Vaion

The Vaion NAD+ pen has been specifically created for at-home use, ensuring easy and convenient access for optimum results at home or on the go. NAD+ (nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide) is naturally in every cell of the human body, known to be critical for human health and longevity. The bioavailability from oral NAD+ supplements is very low compared to when injected and the Vaion pen creates a convenient avenue for clients to inject themselves.

My Skin Chemistry

MY SKIN CHEMISTRY
RENIUX energy

My Skin Chemistry has launched into the UK with its hyaluronic acid skincare range, delivering exceptional moisture retention and clinical results for various complex skin conditions. Its HylaCalm Technology leverages the full potential of hyaluronic acid through a process of sterile sonication, achieving a low molecular weight compound. It is this low weight molecule, when combined with a precise mixture of high and medium weights, that provides deep, lasting hydration and addresses multiple skin concerns by reducing inflammation.

Tonic X

Tonic X is a new liquid supplement created by two specialist aesthetic nurses. The product aims to simplify and optimise a daily supplement and anti-ageing routine, working alongside and enhancing topical skincare regimes. Formulated with astaxanthin and probiotics, it ensures maximum efficiency by providing 100% of the body's dietary reference intake of each listed vitamin and mineral.

InMode

InMode Allure is a new range of devices from InMode, featuring four advanced workstations – Triton, Contoura, Define, and TransformX – designed to support a wide range of procedures including body and facial sculpting, skin rejuvenation, precision facial treatments and hair removal. These devices are clinically proven for multiple solutions, and feature modalities like the Forma handpiece for skin tightening and rejuvenation.

Sisneo

Revicell Pro is a new medical-aesthetic face, hair loss and body treatment device from Sisneo. The device combines 3D layer radiofrequency technology with biophotonic therapy, using four applicators that are each specifically designed for different treatments, including body firming, hair rejuvenation and acne. The 3D layer radio frequency treats skin from the most superficial layers to the deepest, using a variable frequency intelligent system, while the biophotonic therapy induces collagen and elastin production.

Ask Alex

"Isn't everyone over live streaming, or is TikTok worth it?"

I can hear the groans behind your magazine from my desk in Coventry.

"Going live on social media? That's a bit 2018."

Yes, that's when Facebook Live took off. Anything less than NASA-quality WiFi, and the stream was grainy and laggy.

However, if you go online today, you can't avoid live content:

Instagram - Sends you notifications when accounts you follow go live.
YouTube - Is the second largest search engine behind Google, pushes live content on the home page.
Twitch - Was once just a niche gaming platform but is now growing with education and business content.
TikTok - TikTok Live content is embedded into the for you page (FYP or the home page), and TikTok's algorithm actively pushes live streams. It has the richest feature set for sales and promotions and monetisation options for creators who choose to go live. While these may not align with your medical aesthetics practice (TikTok Shop is something that brands and distributors should consider), TikTok Live is a powerhouse in community building.
If your clinic is on TikTok, you must have considered using the live feature. But why are so many people using live streaming or going back to live streaming?

BENEFITS OF LIVE CONTENT

Online streams are arguably the most engaging social video format.

- Streaming is the best community-building tool, with real-time, authentic audience interaction
- You get exposure to lookalike audiences on TikTok, who share similar interests to your existing followers, allowing you to grow your reach
- Followers get notifications when you go live, encouraging them to check in
- On Instagram, YouTube and Twitch, you can save your broadcast to your feed
- Collaborating with other accounts is a great way to reach new audiences with other accounts on TikTok and Instagram
- Save time by streaming and then utilising the live content as content at a later date
- You inadvertently become better on camera by going live!

HOW TO GO LIVE

From a technical perspective, you just need a smartphone, a well-lit space and a good internet connection to go live. An external microphone will improve sound quality and reduce background noise, but it isn't essential.

Make notes around your planned talking points to allow you to fill your live between questions. Bringing anecdotes, favourite products, and case studies can help fill any 'dead air' while the conversation gets going. Remember, if you fail to prepare, prepare to fail!

If you don't want to be seen to randomly be going live on the social platform of your choice, then you need to brand the streams, to elevate them. You might opt to stream:

- Interviews – arguably the simplest and least 'scary' way to go live!
- Event previews and behind-the-scenes content
- Webinars
- Ask Me Anythings (AMAs) and Office Hours Q+As
- Watchalongs
- Live shopping
- Live vodcasts.

Branded streams with a distinct purpose allow you to promote the broadcast beforehand too. Stories and countdowns are perfect for this, but you can even shout it out in your email marketing!

You should go live at a time you think will be convenient for your audience. No one time is perfect – and you must commit – but maybe 9am on a Monday won't suit your patients! Lunchtimes, evenings and weekends are more popular.

Then it's time to go! Introduce yourself and be authentic. Live content is expected to be unfiltered, somewhat 'unplanned' and real. Make sure you're interacting with questions during the stream.

Then you need to analyse. What went well, and what can be improved? Don't expect your live to blow up immediately; don't see a small number of live viewers as a failure. You can still download and repurpose useful clips into feed posts or transcribe the conversation and turn it into an article.

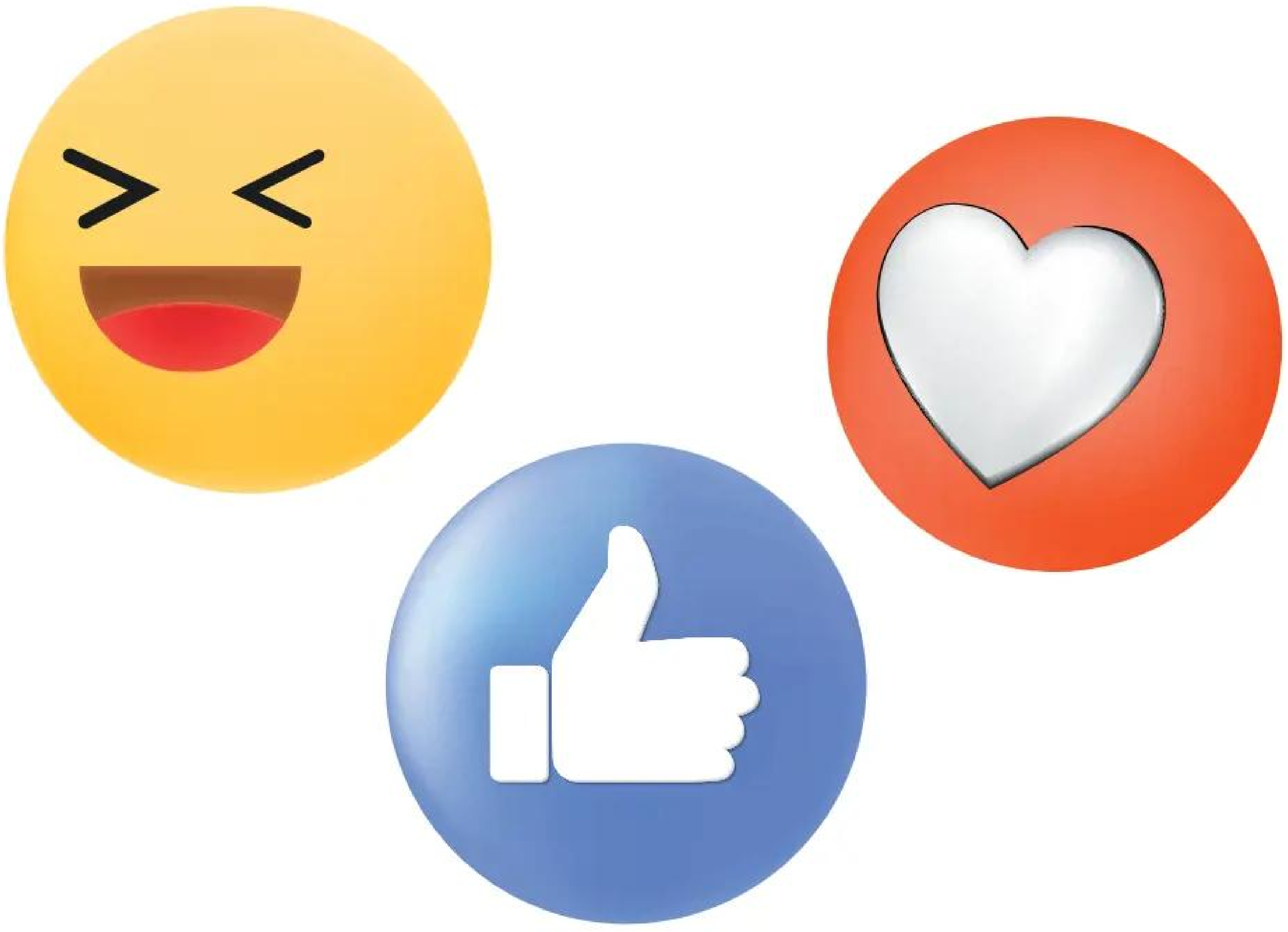
ONE-OFF VS REGULAR STREAMS

Start streaming by trying a one-off broadcast with the above plan. Then review, refine, and repurpose any of the content that came up in the stream, and consider if you'd do it again.

If you start a weekly or a monthly stream, these numbers will grow over time. The benefit of regular streams at a certain time and day means that followers can expect to see you. Regular streamers lean into this and promote a certain day and time for people to tune in. As streams grow, they have the power to not only have a community engage with you, but with each other.

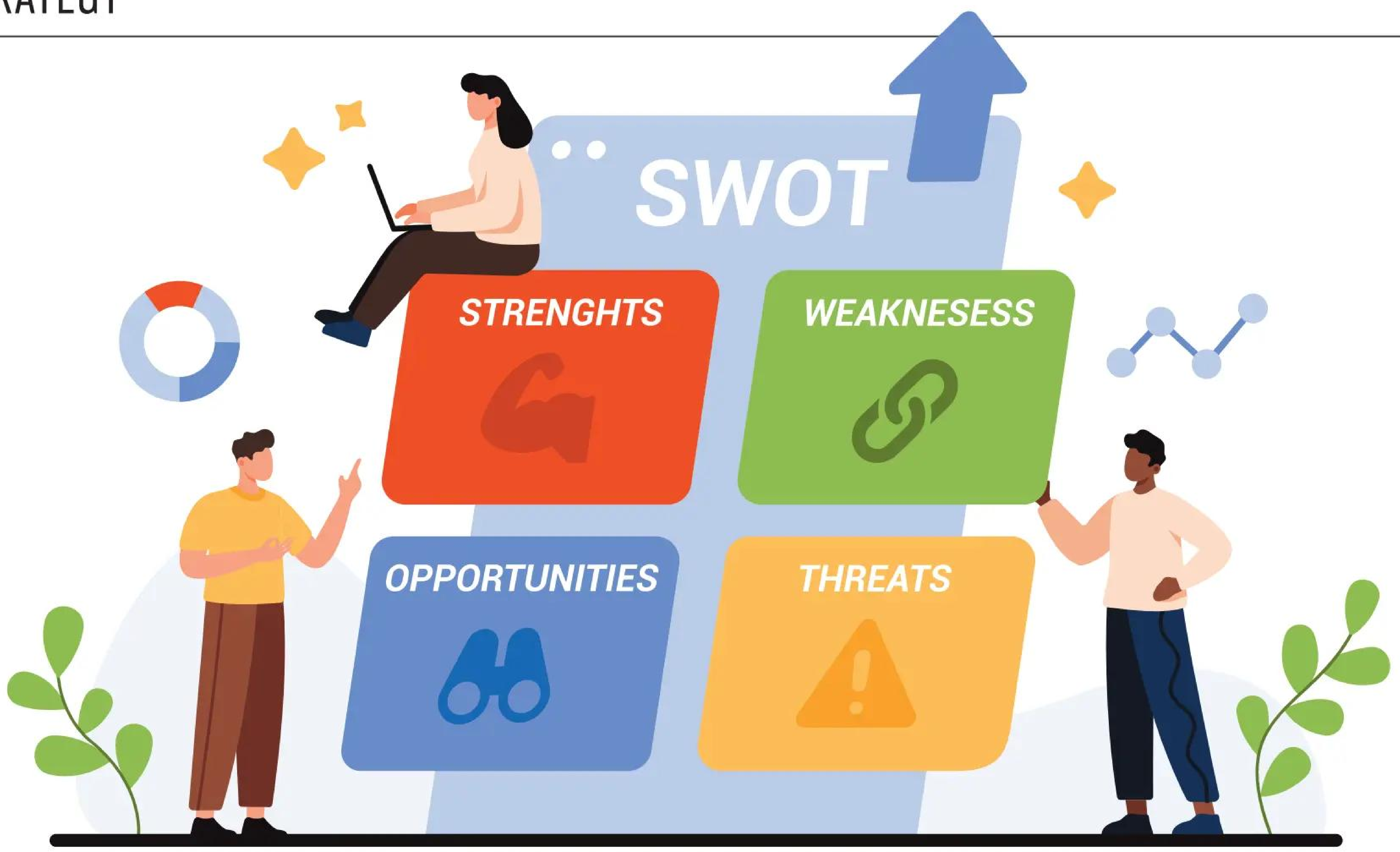
As a bang-for-your-buck tool in your online presence, it is worth considering live streaming as your next social tactic.

If you've got a burning aesthetics marketing question for Ask Alex, please get in touch **@webmarketingclinic** via Instagram, or email **alex@webmarketingclinic.co.uk**



ALEX BUGG

Alex Bugg works for Web Marketing Clinic, a family-run digital agency, which specialises in medical aesthetics. The business builds websites and delivers marketing campaigns for doctors, nurses, dentists, distributors and brands. Contact her at: **alex@webmarketingclinic.co.uk** or follow her on Instagram: **@webmarketingclinic**



Be a SWOT

Vivienne Braidwood considers the importance of strategy in growing your aesthetic business

The UK aesthetics market is evolving at a rapid pace generating over £3.2billion in 2023 and estimated to be worth £5.4billion by 2026.[1,2]

This growth is fueled by many factors, notably:

- **Technological and medical advancements:** treatments are more accessible (safer, cheaper, less downtime, gender neutral outcomes)
- **Consumer needs**: Emergence of new treatments to cater for an aging, more obese population. Influenced by holistic wellness concerns and social media trends
- **Increasingly crowded landscape:** For example, 72% of private dentists and 47% of ophthalmologists now offer aesthetics services.

While this growth presents an opportunity for clinics, many of them are failing to capitalise on this. A recent study by Treatwell found the main issues that aesthetics business owners struggle with are financial stability, managing day-to-day costs, marketing and social media, hiring and staff retention, time management, new client acquisition. Data from other aesthetic software providers also supports these findings.

FAILING TO PLAN, IS PLANNING TO FAIL

There's a lot of pressure on owners to make the right choices. At all times, they need to be very clear on where the business is going, how it will get there, where it is now, and what it will do next.

It all boils down to having a sound business plan, reviewing it and constantly adapting as you go. The strategic planning process involves setting long-term goals, assessing internal and external factors, and developing a roadmap to achieve those objectives. This critical management tool offers many benefits including:

Provides direction:

- Are you clear on your vision, mission, and values?
- Do you have a clear idea where you want to be in 12 - 36 month's time?

Make better-informed decisions:

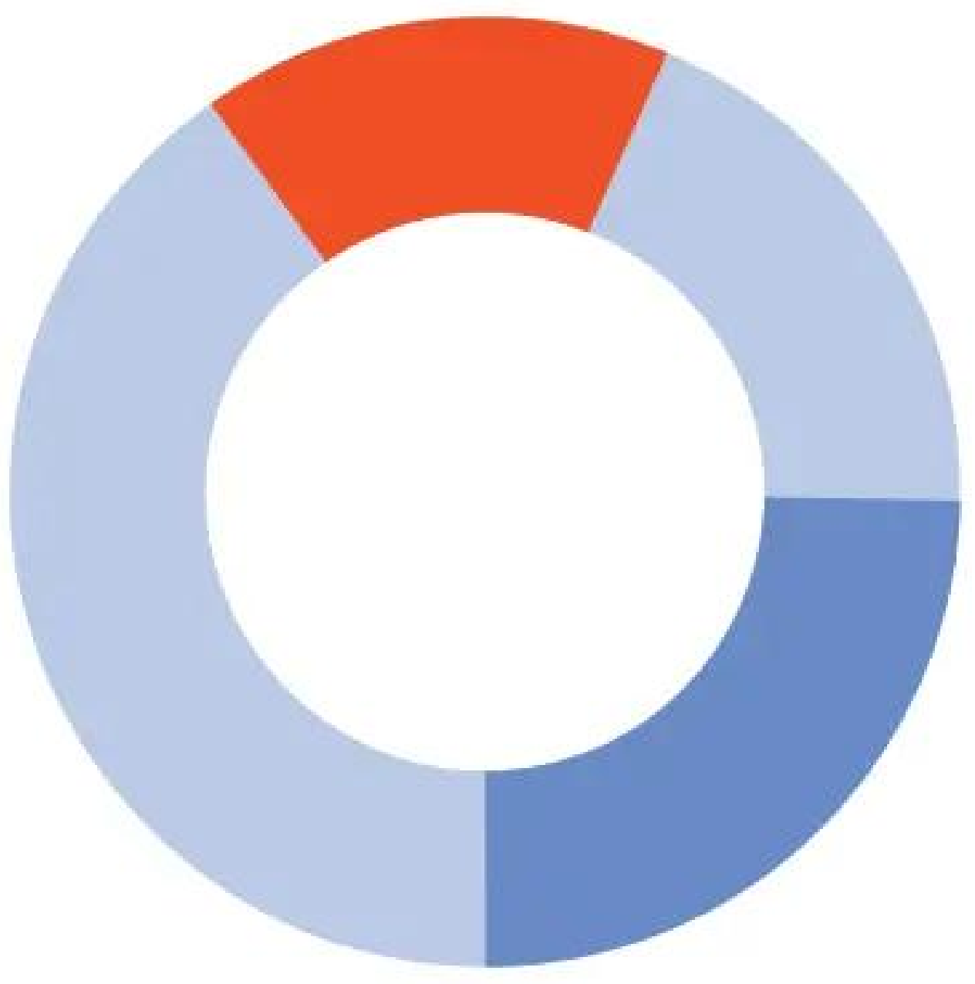
- Do you evaluate your business's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats before making key decisions?

Fosters proactivity:

- Do you feel equipped to anticipate and adapt to changes in the market or are you simply reacting to them?

Alignment and optimisation of resources:

- How well do you organise and prioritise what needs to be done?
- Is your team working together effectively and harmoniously?



GET VERY HONEST WHEN SETTING YOUR GOALS.

Ensure the nature, scale and long-term goals of your business fit with your personal objectives, lifestyle preferences and resources. For you, it may be coming to terms with the fact that you want to keep your operations small and prefer to spend most of your time performing treatments, while others may wish to establish a team or eventually open up additional clinics. The latter would result in being 'on call' 24/7 and more time spent running the business rather than performing treatments.

CONTROL THE CONTROLLABLES

Difficult situations are unavoidable. While you may not be able to control what happens around you, you are in control of how you respond. Focus your time, attention, energy, emotion and resources on what you can influence. This will boost your resilience, reduce your stress levels and improve your performance, impact and likelihood of success. Try to understand the futility of focussing on things you simply cannot control and learn to let go.

USE THE TRIED, TESTED AND SIMPLE SWOT TOOL

SWOT analysis evaluates strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to inform strategic decision making, optimise performance and return on investment. Your ability to get curious about what's happening around you will directly impact how effectively you apply this tool to quickly identify trends, to effectively evaluate options and ultimately make good decisions. Below are some useful prompts.

Strengths: Ask yourself what's working well? Where do you feel you're winning? What positive feedback do you receive from staff, clients, online. Perhaps you have a unique brand, are known for quality, innovation, speed, value for money. You may have other competitive advantages in terms of resources available to you or your natural charisma and ability to influence others. Exploit and use it all to your advantage, to differentiate and get ahead of the competition.

Weaknesses: What's not working or is lacking e.g. abilities, skillsets, money, marketing or energy. Negative feedback from patients, staff, suppliers, business partners, online reviews will provide some insight. To overcome weaknesses, lean on each other's strengths, learn from feedback and take corrective action including staff training on high impact areas.

Opportunities: What trends are in your favour? Who might most value your strengths? Be quick off the mark to pick up trends, win market share and stay ahead of the curve. Know when to diversify and when to exit treatments that no longer serve you. If clients trust you then implement a loyalty programme to encourage and reward repeat business, word of mouth referrals and increased average spend. An exciting development is the rapid growth of medical wellness and longevity treatments as consumers demand more holistic, health-centric approaches. What are you doing to capitalise on this?

Threats: Ask yourself what could go wrong? Who or what might challenge you - not just the competition but the economy, job market, consumer spending, legislative changes, trends you are unprepared for. Treatment lifecycles are shortening due to rapid technological and medical advancements and increased competition. Launch new 'releases' more regularly by reinventing existing treatments, upgrading your machines, or diversifying your offering. In a market where multiple sectors are converging, differentiation is crucial.

CONCLUSION

Strategy really is everything. Clinic owners that proactively adapt to changing trends, alongside effectively managing the strengths and weaknesses of the business, are well-positioned for future success and retain a competitive edge in this increasingly crowded landscape.

Educate yourself on the essentials of managing an aesthetics business and seek expert advice and support for the rest. Build a diverse network to help you, your team and your business perform better. Friends and family are a great source of emotional support while patients can help you with testing ideas, problem solving, referrals and acquiring new patients. Business mentors, professional networks, suppliers and your local authority offer resources including training in business management, industry insights, networking & recruitment opportunities and even financial support.

"Our data shows that the aesthetic businesses that thrive are well managed in terms of their processes, finances and ability to drive income through their patients," says Olivia Silva from Treatwell. "The latter relies on excellent customer service underpinned by the right treatments and competent, well-trained staff. We can support clinics with boosting client reviews and with our marketing tools, analytics, education and social media support."

VIVIENNE BRAIDWOOD

Vivienne Braidwood is a senior leader, business consultant and strategist. She is passionate about helping people, teams, departments, and organisations drive transformational change in culture, diversity, equity and inclusion.

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7 *leadership mistakes*

Leadership consultant **Marcus Haycock** reflects on mistakes he made after his promotion and how he fixed them

When I was promoted to lead a business consulting team, it wasn't a role I sought—it was recognition of my track record. Yet, despite my experience, I found myself unprepared for the leadership challenges that followed. I'm honestly sharing my experiences here today so you can avoid my mistakes if you find yourself in similar circumstances.

MISTAKE #1: THINKING MY APPROACH WAS THE ONLY RIGHT ONE

Experience and recognition had secured a leadership role and the internal belief I should have all the answers as the leader. I was wrong.

Yes, I had a wealth of knowledge, but leading a team differs from being a well-recognised contributor. I lacked awareness that a highly talented team doesn't want to be told what to do – they want to explore, experiment, and find insights for themselves. They need encouragement, not direction, all the time, and in an environment where creativity and empowerment are a core critical success factor, my directive tone stifled rather than nurtured.

MISTAKE #2: MICROMANAGING THE MINUTIAE

I thought closely monitoring team members would ensure better performance, but instead, it created the opposite effect. It gave my team the impression that I didn't trust them. They were talented individuals, but my overzealous monitoring felt more like micromanaging than supporting them.

I wanted to optimise and support their performance, but the result was a culture where I checked up on them rather than checking in with them. As a leader, I had to shift my focus from micromanaging to trusting the team with autonomy and empowering them to take ownership of their work.

MISTAKE #3: NOT SETTING CLEAR GOALS FOR MYSELF

I failed to set daily goals that would keep me focused on high-payoff activities and increase my effectiveness and productivity as a leader. I didn't naturally delegate.

The result? I wasn't developing my team or helping them grow. I quickly realised that by focusing on the tasks I could only take ownership of, I could achieve significantly more, and the team's confidence increased as members gained encouragement from me to lead more projects.

MISTAKE #4: FAILING TO COACH MY TEAM

One of the most significant areas where I fell short was in coaching. I initially missed the opportunity to adopt the non-expert role and act as a coach, channelling thoughtful and powerful questions to team members during 1:1 meetings. I had this urge to show that I had all the answers, but in doing so, I wasn't helping my team learn and grow.

My role wasn't to be the 'answer machine' to every question and every challenge. I was indirectly and unintentionally creating

an environment of dependence on myself. Independent thinking and action were in short supply and I needed to empower my team to find solutions. By reflecting and pivoting to a coaching mindset, I supported each team member to recognise the value in learning, experimenting, and believing in their core strengths to find solutions.

MISTAKE #5: NOT BELIEVING IN MY TEAM'S POTENTIAL

With much more leadership experience and world-class training, I now understand that every employee has untapped potential, and my role as an empowering leader is to help harness the latent talent in each team member to create a culture where everyone flourishes.

My role today isn't about managing projects but unlocking people's potential.

MISTAKE #6: FAILING TO DEFINE THE CULTURE AND VISION

We were all working together, but there was no clearly defined vision, direction, or purpose for the team to align on. Early on, it became evident that we needed to discuss things honestly together. I held a meeting where I proposed that we all have an open conversation about how we want to work together and how we can motivate and recognise each other. The results were profound, allowing us to align on a shared vision. People were invested straight away in the future they could build together.

MISTAKE #7: FIXATING ON FIXING PROBLEMS RATHER THAN PLAYING TO STRENGTHS

I was so fixated on addressing challenges that I overlooked my team's strengths, and instead of focusing on what made us strong, I spent too much time trying to 'fix' what wasn't working.

I learned quickly that playing to individual strengths is the secret to building a high-performing team.

TURNING IT AROUND

The turning point came when I admitted I was failing as a leader. I gathered the team for an open, honest discussion about what was working and what wasn't. I introduced a 'doppelganger' character called Todd to help us critique my leadership style. It worked wonders! We shared feedback, laughed, and devised ideas to improve Todd's performance. Todd was essentially me on a bad day instead of Marcus, the empowering leader they had glimpses of. The meeting concluded, and the team felt heard, valued, and, most importantly, empowered. A year later, we received an international team award for contributions to business consulting and were recognised as a leading high-performing team in Europe.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Admitting and learning from your mistakes is uncomfortable but necessary for growth and human connection. Leadership isn't about being perfect – it's about being authentic, caring, and playing to your team's strengths, creating a culture where everyone can thrive. As Simon Sinek says, "Leadership is not about being in charge. It's about taking care of those in your charge."

I hope this honest account helps you avoid my mistakes. Please connect if you want a sounding board to discuss your leadership challenges and create your winning team.

MARCUS HAYCOCK

Marcus Haycock is a distinguished leadership development coach and trainer dedicated to empowering managers and business owners to become transformational leaders who deliver transformational results. He has acquired over 21 years of medical aesthetics consulting, business training, and leadership expertise. He is now an associate director for LMI, a globally renowned people development organisation established over 60 years ago, with over two million successful participants graduating from its world-leading development programmes.

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Mental health screening
as part of your consultation process

Julie Scott explains why understanding the psychological landscape of patients is crucial

JULIE SCOTT

Julie Scott is an NMC registered independent nurse prescriber, level 7 qualified aesthetic injector and trainer with over 30 years of experience in the field of plastics and skin rejuvenation. As an aesthetic mentor and international speaker, Scott has won 'Aesthetic Nurse Practitioner of the Year' at the Aesthetic Medicine Awards in 2024, and at the Aesthetic Awards in 2024 and 2022.

The integration of mental health screenings into aesthetic consultations has emerged as a best practice that not only enhances patient care but also significantly improves treatment outcomes. This article will explore the importance of mental health assessments, effective screening tools, and practical strategies for building trust with patients, supported by real-life examples demonstrating the benefits of this approach.

THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

Psychological factors play a crucial role in a patient's decision to seek aesthetic treatments. Many individuals pursue these procedures with the belief that physical improvements will translate into enhanced self-esteem, social acceptance, and overall happiness.[1] However, this assumption can often lead to unrealistic expectations. As practitioners, we must recognise that the pursuit of improved physical appearance is often a means to a psychological end.[2]

There are certain periods in life where psychological impacts are greater; research indicates that nearly 40% of women report mood changes during perimenopause, a stage characterised by significant hormonal fluctuations and emotional vulnerability.[3,4] For many women, these changes can amplify feelings of inadequacy, leading to an increased desire for aesthetic enhancements as a form of self-care. Understanding the psychological drivers behind the motivations of your patient demographic is essential for providing appropriate care.

Furthermore, studies have shown that women with a history of mental health disorders, such as anxiety or depression, may be particularly vulnerable during menopause. For instance, the instance of developing depressive symptoms can increase significantly during this transitional period, highlighting the need for practitioners to be vigilant and proactive in their assessments. By understanding these psychological factors, practitioners can make informed decisions regarding treatment suitability and develop tailored approaches that prioritise both physical and mental health.[5]

THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

At the heart of our practice lies a commitment to cultivating mutual respect and rapport with our patients, with a thorough consultation process serving as our cornerstone. By prioritising comprehensive assessments, we can identify patients with psychological concerns early on, including those who may struggle with body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) and other mental health conditions.[6] This diligent patient selection not only helps us avoid difficult situations but also fosters trust and understanding. Managing expectations and delivering educational content throughout the consultation and aftercare process significantly reduces the likelihood of patient dissatisfactions, ensuring that each individual feels valued and supported during their treatments.

The following is the process that I adopt with my patients.

1. **Pre-consultation education:**
    - Patients often follow aesthetic accounts on social media for years, absorbing information passively. To engage these patients proactively, I provide valuable insights through platforms like Instagram and my clinic's website.
    - This foundational education sets the stage for informed discussions during the actual consultation.

2. **Detailed consultation appointment:**
    - I carry out a full medical history assessment, including a thorough mental health and body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) screening. Tools such as the Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9) allow for an effective assessment of depressive symptoms.[7,8]
    - I employ a 'patient passport' framework and adopt 'insights discovery colours personality types' communication tool to tailor the interaction to each patient's needs.[9]
    - My consultation is a 60-minute private and confidential educational experience, prioritising active listening. I conduct a detailed skin assessment and document baseline clinical photos, which serve as critical references for future treatments.

3. **Addressing concerns:**
    - During the appointment, I discuss the patient's presenting complaints without bias, ensuring there is no 'planting of seeds' or judgment. This helps foster an open dialogue about expectations and concerns regarding potential treatments.

4. **Formulating treatment plans:**
    - A clinically indicated treatment plan is developed collaboratively. If a patient is deemed unsuitable for treatment, I refer them to a specialist network or the NHS pathway for appropriate mental health support.

5. **Ongoing patient support:**
    - Following treatment, a post-care regime ensures that patients feel supported.
    - I emphasise the importance of a six-month treatment plan review to monitor patient satisfaction.

EFFECTIVE SCREENING TOOLS

Implementing effective mental health screening tools is a vital component of the consultation process. Two widely used diagnostic tools in aesthetic medicine are the PHQ-9 and the Veale body image questionnaire.[7,8]

- **PHQ-9:** Designed to assess the presence of and severity of depression and helps identify patients who may require further evaluation or intervention.[10] The questionnaire consists of nine questions related to mood and behaviour over the past two weeks. Scores help determine the severity of depressive symptoms and help guide treatment decisions.
  For example, a patient who scores high on the PHQ-9 may reveal underlying issues related to self-image and mental health that warrant further exploration before proceeding with aesthetic procedures.
- **Veale body image questionnaire:** This tool specifically targets body image concerns, which are critical to assess in aesthetic practices.[5] The questionnaire helps identify patients who may be experiencing BDD or other body image issues. Those exhibiting significant distress regarding their appearance may require a referral for psychological support rather than aesthetic treatments.

Integrating these screening tools into the initial consultation and ongoing patient monitoring allows practitioners to gain valuable insights into the patient's mental health status and help tailor treatment plans accordingly. By doing so, practitioners can identify potential psychological vulnerabilities, ultimately leading to more informed and compassionate care.

BUILDING TRUST WITH PATIENTS

Creating a trusting and open environment is essential for effective consultations. Patients need to feel comfortable discussing their insecurities and motivations. Here are some techniques for building that trust:

- **Active listening:** One of the most important skills in establishing rapport is active listening.[11] When patients feel heard, they are more likely to open up about their concerns. Practitioners should practice reflective listening, summarising what the patient has said to ensure understanding and validate their feelings.
- **Empathy and understanding:** Demonstrating empathy goes a long way in fostering trust and acknowledges the emotional aspects of patients seeking aesthetic treatments.[12] For example, expressing an understanding of how societal pressures can impact a woman's self-image during menopause can create a deeper connection.
- **Transparent communication:** Being clear about the consultation process and what patients can expect.[13] Providing accessible information about treatment options, risks, and potential outcomes encourages informed decision-making. Transparency also includes discussing the limitations of aesthetic procedures in addressing deeper psychological issues.

- **Encouraging questions:** Encourage patients to ask questions and express any concerns they may have. This not only demonstrates openness but also helps clarify any misunderstandings about the treatment process.

CASE STUDY: PRIORITISING MENTAL HEALTH

A patient presented to my clinic for the first time after recently going through a divorce. It was immediately evident from this initial meeting that her self-esteem was extremely low and that she was vulnerable. With this confirmed by her responses to the PHQ-9 questionnaire, I explained that it would not be in her best interest to proceed with treatment at this time as she may be seeking to resolve a concern separate to her appearance through aesthetic means. Furthermore, she was not best placed to navigate potential dissatisfaction with the results, or possible complications. I instead referred her for counselling and suggested she return when she felt more secure in herself – which she did eight months later, feeling radiant after her treatment.

CASE STUDY: THE CANDID DISCUSSION

A patient sought treatment from me after having seen another practitioner elsewhere before. She presented as clearly over-treated and as our consultation progressed my assessment and application of the Veale Body Image Questionnaire made evident that she was symptomatic of BDD. An open conversation was necessary in which I explained that it would be inappropriate to proceed with a treatment as she was already overfilled and displaying signs of BDD. Instead, I felt it best to refer her to mental health support. On this occasion the patient left angry, but I still believe this was the correct decision. As practitioners we are in a position where doing the right thing is not optional and practitioners should always prioritise ethics over profit.

CASE STUDY: POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

Another patient in her early twenties approached me about treatments to reach her aesthetic ideal of a slim jaw and defined chin - an outcome she was striving for as a result of social influence. I discussed with this patient at length how her proportions were in harmony with her own facial features and that treatment was not appropriate. It was important to reassure her that there is no need to conform to a norm and that embracing one's own beauty is paramount. She left my clinic with only an SPF and instructions to take care of their skin. In return, I received a review in which the patient stated 'I am beautiful' – I'll take that!

> *"These real-life examples highlight that incorporating mental health screenings into your consultations is not just best practice; it is essential for holistic patient care. Understanding the psychological factors influencing a patient's decision to pursue aesthetic treatments enables practitioners to provide informed, compassionate care tailored to individual needs."*

CONCLUSION

These real-life examples highlight that incorporating mental health screenings into your consultations is not just best practice; it is essential for holistic patient care. Understanding the psychological factors influencing a patient's decision to pursue aesthetic treatments enables practitioners to provide informed, compassionate care tailored to individual needs. Our priority is always patient well-being, even if that means making difficult decisions to 'Say No' when a particular treatment isn't in the patient's best interest. While this can sometimes lead to disappointment of frustration, maintaining your integrity and upholding ethical standards is essential in providing safe and effective care.

Utilising effective screening tools like the PHQ-9 and Veale body image questionnaire can uncover underlying mental health concerns, allowing for early intervention and appropriate referrals.[7,8] Building trust through active listening, empathy, and transparent communication fosters a supportive environment where patients feel valued and understood.

Ultimately, the integration of mental health screening into your practice is crucial for fostering a compassionate and effective approach to patient care. By adopting these practices, we ensure that our patients not only look their best but also feel their best throughout their treatment journey.

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THE REALITY OF *compressed hours*

As businesses navigate evolving workplace dynamics, compressed working hours are emerging as a compelling alternative to traditional work patterns.

While Labour has ruled out mandating a four-day week, the party's support for flexible arrangements, including compressed hours, signals a significant shift in British workplace culture.[1]

THE EMPLOYEE PERSPECTIVE

A study from Indeed UK (2023) has revealed that 65% of British workers would accept a pay cut for a shorter working week and increased flexibility, highlighting a growing appetite for alternative working patterns. For employees, compressed hours present a tempting proposition beyond the obvious attraction of extended weekends.[2]

David Banaghan, co-founder and interim chief executive at recruitment software company Occupop, highlights, "When it comes to making job changes, people are no longer just prioritising salary - work-life balance has become a crucial factor in candidate decision-making."

The financial implications are significant. According to recent research, UK parents spend an average of £7,000 annually on child care, per child. Compressed hours could help reduce these costs, offering substantial savings for working families.[3]

BUSINESS BENEFITS

For businesses, the advantages extend beyond employee satisfaction. The CIPD's business case surrounding flexible working highlights that flexible working can contribute to increased productivity and reduced absenteeism.[4]

Data from LinkedIn (2023) reveals that job posts offering flexible working arrangements, as well as culture and wellbeing, receive nearly three times (+175%) more views and more than twice (+139%) as many applications.[5]

"In today's competitive job market, flexible working is becoming a powerful differentiator," explains Banaghan.

THE CHALLENGES: NOT WITHOUT ITS HURDLES

The transition to compressed hours isn't without its complexities. A recent LinkedIn poll by People Management revealed that 23% of organisations anticipate significant issues in implementing compressed hours. Key considerations centre around maintaining service consistency, managing client expectations and adapting operational processes.[6]

IMPLEMENTATION: A STRATEGIC APPROACH

"When advising companies on their recruitment strategies, we emphasise the importance of clearly communicating compressed hours policies during the hiring process," Banaghan notes.

Some considerations for businesses include:

Workplace readiness

- Ensuring adequate rest areas for longer shifts
- Implementing robust health and safety protocols
- Upgrading technology for remote collaboration.

Performance monitoring

- Establishing clear productivity metrics
- Regular well-being check-ins
- Quarterly review processes.

CONCLUSION

As UK businesses navigate this transition, the success of compressed hours will largely depend on thoughtful implementation and continuous adaptation. With proper planning and open dialogue between employers and employees, compressed hours could represent not just a temporary trend, but a sustainable future for UK workplaces.

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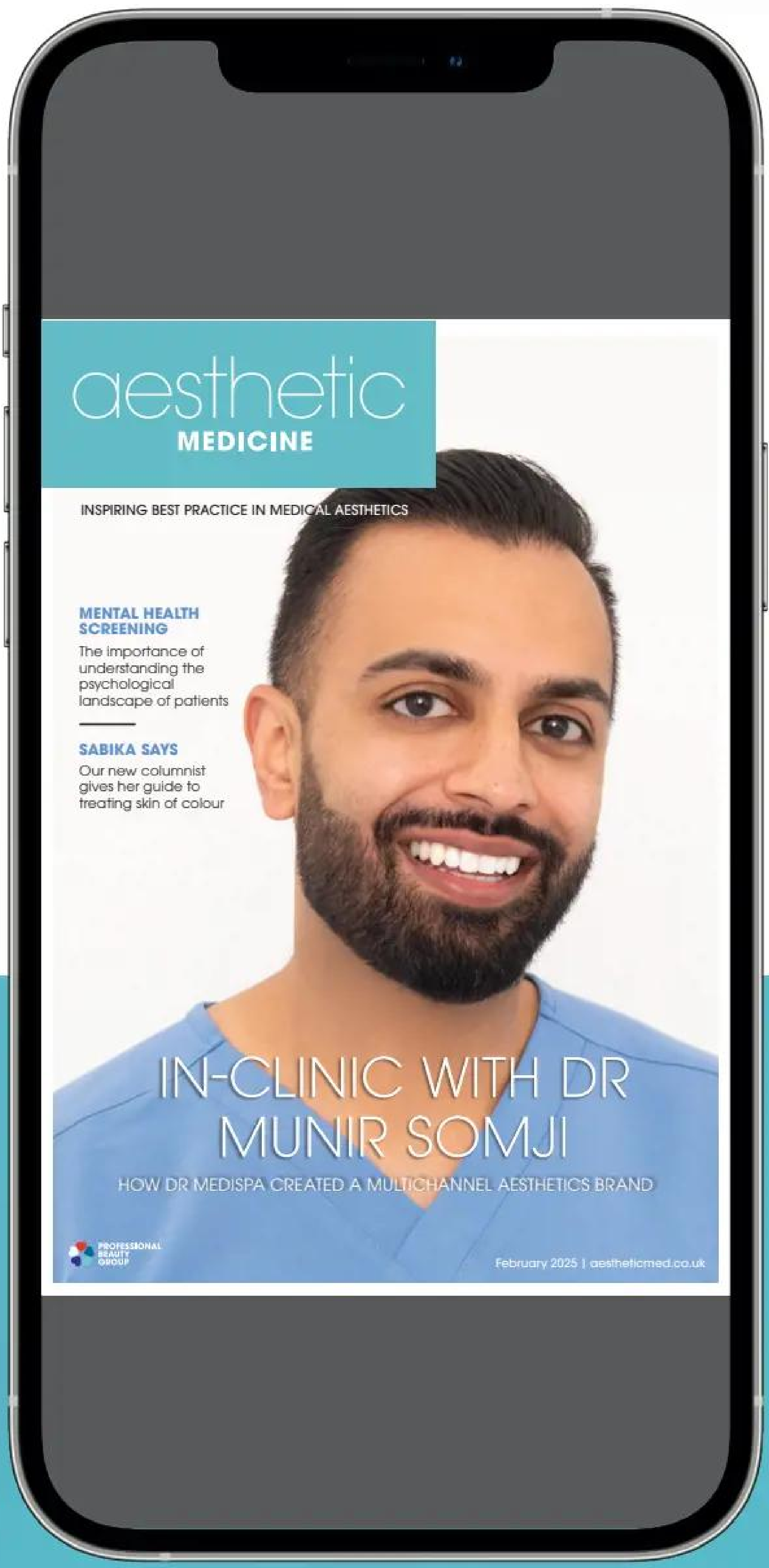

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